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ABSTRACT

The impacts of the adult basic education and training (ABET) courses offered by the Centre for Adult and Continuing Education (CACE) in South Africa's Northern Cape Province were examined. Data were collected through questionnaires, open-ended and semi-structured interviews, observations, and document analysis. Of the 221 students enrolled in the certificate course in 1996-1999, 148 (67%) completed it, and of the 90 students enrolled in the advanced diploma course, 54 (60%) completed it. Most advanced course completers remained in the jobs they held while in the course, and only eight completers were currently working in ABET provision. The advanced course's greatest success lay in its impact on organizational development and designing learning events. No correlation was found between completing the certificate course and access to employment; however, all respondents credited the certificate courses with substantially increasing their self-confidence, ability to act independently, and understanding of cultural diversity. The certificate course had a positive impact on income, especially in rural areas. (Thirty tables/figures are included. The bibliography lists 62 references. The document's 13 appendixes include the following items: CACE evaluation questionnaire; interview guidelines; list of materials examined; sample outcomes; information about the survey respondents and course funding mechanisms; and lists of individuals interviewed and staff involved in Northern Cape programs.) (MN)

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ABET AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE NORTHERN CAPE PROVINCE

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ABET AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE NORTHERN CAPE PROVINCE

ASSESSING IMPACTS OF CACE COURSES 1996–1999

October 2001

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The views expressed are not necessarily those of DFI

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ABET	Adult Basic Education and Training
AET	Adult Education and Training
AETASA	Adult Educators and Trainers Association of South Africa
CACE	Centre for Adult and Continuing Education
DFID	Department for International Development in Southern Africa
EMIS	Educational Management and Information Systems
ETD	Education, Training and Development
ETDP	Education, Training and Development Practices/Practitioner
HEI	Higher Education Institute
MYIP	Multi-Year Implementation Plan
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
OBE	Outcomes-Based Education
ODA	Overseas Development Agency
PALC	Public Adult Learning Centre
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
RC	Regional Co-ordinator
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SETA	Sector Education and Training Authority
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
SMME	Small Medium and Micro-Enterprises
UWC	University of the Western Cape

FOREWORD

In 1994 the first democratic elections ensured that the new province of the Northern Cape (NCP) was formed and the African National Congress was the majority party. The new Member of the Executive (MEC) for Education in the NCP was Ms Tina Joemat-Petterson, an alumna of the University of Western Cape and committed to reconstruction and development of her province. She almost immediately convened a meeting of stakeholders in the province to discuss possibilities for deepening adult basic education, training and development. I was one of her invited guests from outside the province. The foundation for the partnership between the University of Western Cape (UWC) and the Ministry and the Department of Education of the Northern Cape Province was laid at that meeting.

Seven years later this report evaluates the achievements of key aspects of the partnership. These achievements on the whole are impressive. They are impressive because the hinges of the doors of opportunity have been oiled by many people. The two major funders who gave support from the outset were Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) and the Department for International Development in Southern Africa (DFID). The staff in the Ministry and Department of Education in the NCP joined the staff of the Centre for Adult and Continuing Education (CACE) at UWC in working with passion and commitment to ensure quality outcomes. I am very grateful to all the staff, students, tutors, funders, bureaucrats and politicians who have worked together to make this possible.

At the Research Dissemination Conference held in Kimberly on 17 and 18 April 2001 to consult on the findings of the research, it was clear that while much has been achieved, we still have a long way to go. The adult education infrastructure and support in government, in civil society, and in business is still fragile and limited. There are still unacceptable levels of poverty, unemployment, and violence. Democratic practices still need to be consolidated at local and provincial levels. The research shows that training as adult educators does help people to take control of their own lives and become proactive development activists, whether working, for example, as local councillors, police reservists, health educators or literacy teachers. The Conference participants therefore resolved to challenge the Northern Cape Legislature to continue to give leadership in the country with regard to reconstruction and development issues and to 'become the first illiteracy-free province in the country'.

I would like to thank, in particular, the Premier Manne Dipicio and MEC Tina Joemat-Petterson for their support of this programme which will possibly become a building block in the new National Institute for Higher Education in the province. I also appreciate the work of the research team under the able leadership of the external evaluator, Caroline Kerfoot and Jonathan Geidt. None of this would have been possible without the ongoing and unstinting work of the staff of CACE working with their counterparts in the Northern Cape.

Professor Shirley Walters
Director, CACE, UWC

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EXTERNAL RESEARCHER'S PREFACE

When I started on this impact study, I approached the task with a mixture of excitement and trepidation. The partnership between the Northern Cape government and CACE was striking in it scope and duration and seemed to have achieved much. On the other hand, I had no illusions about the mammoth task that faces all those involved in transforming adult education, and ABET in particular. I therefore did not have great expectations.

A team of researchers and I then undertook many absorbing journeys through the Northern Cape from tiny rural communities to mining towns, talking to past students and others in adult learning centres, prisons, community structures, NGOs and government departments.

What we found was both unexpected and often remarkable. With only one exception, students were eager to be interviewed, many travelling long distances at inconvenient times in order to share their experiences and make sure that we understood how important CACE had been in their lives. Excitement about their own achievements since completing the course infused most of these interviews, even with students who had not completed their courses.

It is noteworthy that Certificate students as a group are involved in every single aspect of development, notably, local government, community police forums, water and sanitation, AIDS education, domestic violence, youth work and small business development.

Despite the weaknesses identified and disappointments expressed by respondents, especially with regard to the implementation of ABET, the energy and enthusiasm generated by the partnership is a source of inspiration, particularly given the social and economic problems facing students working in communities.

I hope that this report can play some part in supporting ABET and development workers and affirming the far-reaching potential of effective adult education.

Caroline Kerfoot
External researcher

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From CACE, Jonathan Geidt for generous and tireless support with all aspects of the research, constant advice and encouragement, as well as coding, careful editing and constructive comments; Lucy Alexander for valuable insights throughout and crucial help with follow-up interviewing; Zelda Groener for important and timely comments; Natheem Hendricks for his willingness to leap into the breach and help out with interviewing in the Springbok region; Nomvuyo Dayile for guidance on the research team and Shirley Walters for her support and vital contributions throughout the project.

Past CACE students Xolile Jack, Alvin Matthee, Terry Grove, and Elizabeth Bugan who gave generously of their time to help set up interviews – this research would have been much the poorer without them. Also Mita Lotriet, Rebecca Cornelius, Cathy Matthee, Kholeka Stuurman and any others I may have inadvertently omitted.

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Xolile Jack for the map on Map 6.2 and Anne Westoby for drawing it on computer. Robert Hichens for all other maps.

Nonkonzo Martins, Sonia Wanza, Suheimah Towfie for administrative support under often trying circumstances; Jonathan Geidt for convening the dissemination conference and Jenny Raatz, Bettie Uithaler and Mittah Seleka for tirelessly organising and administering it; Mrs.Marianna Greyling of the Kimberley Teachers' Centre for her assistance.

Hayley Swartland for help with finding information in the Kimberley office. Steven Kemp for keeping a watchful eye on the budget. Glen Arendse, CACE Resource Centre Coordinator, for generous assistance with finding resources.

Finally, neither the Northern Cape ABET project nor this research would have taken place without the political and educational vision and commitment of Shirley Walters.

Caroline Kerfoot

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CHAPTER 1 – RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

The Northern Cape is the largest South African province but with the lowest population. Its economy is characterised by extreme inequalities of income between races, male and female-headed households, and rural and urban communities: 43% of adults over 20 years have less than seven years education and 22% have no schooling at all.

After 1994 the newly elected ANC majority government in the province had to build an infrastructure from scratch. In the field of education, adult education and training was seen as a crucial component of reconstruction and development. The project – the subject of this research report – began in 1996 as a result of a partnership formed between the Department of Education, DFID, SIDA and other donors, and the Centre for Adult and Continuing Education (CACE) at the University of the Western Cape.

The project had the following objectives:

- to develop sustainable capacity within the province to enable delivery of improved Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) programmes;
- to assist the advancement of systematic professional training of adult educators, trainers and development practitioners to enable them to deliver ABET more effectively; and
- to help to build up the capacity of professional staff to implement new technologies implicit in an integrated system of education and training within the National Qualifications Framework (NQF).

Between 1996 and the end of 1999, CACE delivered two cycles of ABET training programmes at Certificate and Advanced Diploma levels. Each course was run part-time over two years, and 148 and 54 students respectively graduated from each programme.

The aim of the research

Research into the impact of the CACE programmes was carried out between September 2000 and March 2001. This report, which describes that research, has two primary aims:

1. to describe the ways in which the project has affected the training practices and lives of past students;
2. to document and analyse the problems and successes of implementing capacity-building ABET training in the province.

The study investigates the impact of the courses in three broad areas: the personal and professional lives of students; the provision of ABET to learners in the province (within the ABET Unit and other sectors and contexts); and the communities in which past students live or work.

Research methodology

The methodology used was mainly but not exclusively qualitative, using a mix of questionnaires, open-ended and semi-structured interviews, observations and document analysis. After initial open-ended interviews and observations, questionnaires were sent to all Northern Cape students who took the Advanced Diploma and Certificate courses between 1996 and 1999. The response rate was 30% for the Certificate and 17% for the Advanced Diploma (27% overall).

For semi-structured interviews, purposive sampling was used to identify groups of students according to geographical location, course, gender, language, and whether they completed the courses.

A team of past CACE students from both courses was trained as assistant researchers, and 30% of Certificate students and 32% of Advanced Diploma students were interviewed.

Initial findings were presented for reactions and debate at a stakeholder symposium in Kimberley in February 2001. Two months later, a draft report was discussed at a dissemination conference which was attended by representatives from most of the ABET role-players in the Northern Cape. This resulted in a set of recommendations to the provincial government and Department of Education (ABET Unit). The recommendations are listed in the *Afterword* at the end of this report.

Two issues emerged from early interviews and observations and became increasingly significant as the research progressed. The first was the difference between students' ability to apply what they learnt on CACE courses in community-based contexts and in the more formal environment of the public adult learning centres. The second was that the communities in which there were clusters of CACE students were not necessarily those in which there were a greater number of development initiatives. Research strategies in the later phases of the research were designed to explore some of the reasons for these two findings.

Key project outputs are summarised in the table below:

		Certificate	Advanced Diploma
1996–7 cycle	Number of students registered	77	34
	Number that completed	52	21
1998–9 cycle	Number of students registered	144	56
	Number that completed	96	33
Total graduates		148	54
Overall completion rate		67%	60%
Percentage of women		67%	42%
Percentage of rural students		76%	53,5%

Summary of CACE course outputs in the Northern Cape

CHAPTER 2 – THE ADVANCED DIPLOMA

The Advanced Diploma is a mixed-mode course, combining distance education and resource-based learning. It targets ETDPs in public adult learning centres, non-governmental organisations, government sectors or business, etc. and covers areas such as adult learning and teaching, learning programme design and interventions for organisational development. The entry requirement is matric plus a three-year qualification, and experience as an educator, trainer or development practitioner.

The project partners anticipated that graduates would find employment as managers or trainers

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in a variety of adult education contexts and thus build strategic capacity. For graduates now in the higher levels of the ABET Unit and management or training positions elsewhere, the generic nature of the qualification has enabled them to apply what they learnt. However, these form only 8% of the total student database.

For the majority of students who expected to move into jobs as facilitators or trainers within the ABET field, the course has had very little impact. A cluster of policy and legislative factors seem to provide an explanation (see Chapter 2, sections 7.2 and 8; and Chapter 6, section 2.6.1). As the number of students working in ABET is so small, the potential of the first year of the course – which covered the ABET system, learning theories, curriculum design and evaluation, etc. – is almost untapped and it is hard to draw conclusions about the extent to which it fitted the needs of this sector.

However, the impact of the course was also affected by a tension between the need to develop a generic curriculum that would both equip people for senior positions as well as for the day-to-day realities of ABET on the ground. Many valued the conceptual and theoretical depth of the course; others found the balance between theory and practice uneven. On a personal level, students report a deeper understanding of the importance of tolerance and human dignity, increased confidence to challenge unjust practices and to promote new ways of interacting, and improved academic skills.

Economic patterns for this group of students are stable, most staying in the jobs that they held while on the course. Few have received either financial or professional recognition for completing this qualification. This is a reflection of a static job market and little growth in the adult education sector.

The greatest success of the course lies in the impact on organisational development and designing learning events: students have applied what they learnt in a range of sectors and initiatives such as correctional services, police services, community policing bodies, churches and school governing bodies.

ABET and development

The impact on ABET has been limited: only 15% (eight) of past students currently work in formal ABET provision, three of them in sectors other than the Department of Education. A significant proportion of respondents (64%) still work in the formal schooling sector. One result of the course has, therefore, been to create a reservoir of skills waiting to be tapped.

The current economic environment justifies the broad vision for adult education embraced by the Advanced Diploma: many of those who have made most use of what they learnt are located outside the ABET Unit, in other government departments or in NGOs. It is significant that all but one of those who did both the Certificate and Advanced Diploma are involved in development organisations or initiatives (seven students).

Nonetheless, the Advanced Diploma has not yet fulfilled its potential as a catalyst for development: there was no correlation between completing this course and community involvement, and 36% of the respondents were not involved in projects other than church activities. There are personal, professional and course-related factors behind this, for example:

- Students generally have secure employment and related commitments. Some are deeply committed to development; others do not seem to identify with poorer communities.
- The course did not appear to place sufficient emphasis on exploring systemic, logistical and curricular mechanisms for linking ABET and development. This would also have created a link with the Certificate and equipped students to act as tutors to Certificate students.

The implementation of the long-term vision for ABET in the Northern Cape would be enhanced if there were more trained strategists in management positions able to combine deep understandings of

both education and development. This is not yet the case.
Recommendations include: infusing the ABET modules more strongly with a transformation agenda so that students are able to use this as a touchstone for evaluating curricula, learning materials and methodologies; ensuring a balance of theoretical and applied competence in all modules; including some investigation of the 'T' or Training component of ABET; and addressing the continuing separation between education and development in the National Unit Standards for ABET practitioners.

CHAPTER 3 – THE CERTIFICATE COURSE

The Certificate course is a distance education programme intended to prepare community workers who have no experience of tertiary education as education, training and development practitioners (ETDPs). The mode of delivery is predominantly face-to-face, through intensive residentially based study weekends that are backed up by local study groups led by CACE-trained tutors.

The course seems to have been exceptional in its ability to transform the beliefs, attitudes and knowledge of a very diverse group of students. This achievement of the course is even more exceptional in the context of distance learning since many distance learners are adults with established belief systems. The participatory, critical and activist values reflected in the course methodology have played a large part in its transformative nature.

While the impact is not equally profound on all students, there is evidence that the ideas or practices of most students have undergone changes that can be linked to some aspect of the course. These changes have, however, generally been more successful in community-based contexts than in the formal environment of public adult learning centres (see Chapter 4).

The course has succeeded in building a foundation for lifelong learning: all students who returned the questionnaire are interested in further study.

All respondents report a substantial growth in self-confidence, especially for women and older students. Other impacts include the ability to act independently and a greater understanding of cultural diversity.

The course has had a positive impact on patterns of income, especially in rural areas: 47% recorded an increase (43% of females and 52% of males). Greater increases were recorded for respondents who have Setswana or isiXhosa as their mother-tongue than for Afrikaans speakers. As 62% of those who recorded a change in income were working in the ABET system, this indicates a growing number of African students employed in PALCs along with the increase in provision in poorer communities.

There is no correlation between completing the course, or results obtained, and access to employment. Limited opportunities and vast distances mean that jobs are taken by those on hand, not necessarily by the best qualified. However, many students report that they got their present jobs as a result of the Certificate course.

The unemployment rate for Certificate students is 21%, lower than the national average of 33,9% and the provincial average of 28,5%. Fewer from the second cycle (1998–9) are unemployed. A majority who came on the course in temporary jobs still hold temporary jobs today (30%). Altogether 47% of students are currently in temporary jobs: the employment context is still characterised by insecurity.

ABET and development

Only 25% of Certificate students are employed by the ABET Unit as facilitators or Cluster Programme Managers, 81% of these from the 1998–9 cycle (see Chapter 4).

The curriculum is strongly appropriate for the purposes of most students in development contexts.

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The combination of the four modules, ***Facilitating Adult Learning, Contextual Studies, Organising Skills*** and ***Research Skills***, seems to have been a powerful catalyst in equipping students to initiate or participate in development projects (see Chapter 5).

More second cycle students are employed in other sectors, especially local government, due to different recruitment strategies and increasing local opportunities. The effect is, thus, to create a wider and potentially more sustainable impact on educational and development initiatives.

Recommendations include: reducing the load on students in the second year, more emphasis on the design of learning programmes and unit standards, and providing opportunities for practical teaching experience during the course.

CHAPTER 4 – CACE STUDENTS IN ABET

This chapter covers the impact of CACE courses – particularly the Certificate – on the practices of students employed in the ABET Unit as facilitators and Cluster Programme Managers (CPMs). It also discusses students working in ABET in other sectors such as Correctional Services. The main issue is the difference between students' ability to apply what they had learnt in community-based contexts (see Chapter 5) and in public adult learning centres.

Only 17% of the facilitators employed by the ABET Unit in 2000 were CACE students. This represents 25% of Certificate graduates over the two cycles and seems surprisingly low, given that one of the main objectives of the partnership was to build capacity for improved ABET delivery. Various explanations have emerged, among them:

- the continuing shifts in national education policies and priorities;
- selection processes, which until 2000 seemed to be flawed by bias and an uneven belief in the value of an adult education qualification; and
- the high level of job insecurity caused by the system of nine-month contracts for facilitators and CPMs. This system is costly in terms of time, money, human resources, and human relations. It results in high mobility and instability: of the respondents only 35% had stayed in the system from 1999 to 2000.

Students in the first cycle (1996–7) seem to have been more severely affected by the above factors: only seven students from this cycle were employed by the ABET Unit in 2000 compared to 30 from the second cycle.

In addition, some students did not want employment in the Department of Education, as their motivation was to improve their skills in contexts such as Health or Social Services.

In 2001, 36% of Cluster Programme Managers are CACE students. Impacts recorded by these students, and confirmed by ABET Unit staff, include more efficient organising, managing, planning and monitoring of learning centres. The ***Organising Skills*** module has had a strong influence. Other effects traceable to the programme are the effective teaching of small business skills at ABET Level 4, and better recruitment of learners. There is a limited but distinct impact in terms of participatory democracy: some learners have become more involved in community structures and others are assisted to gain access to information and services.

The project goal of building sustainable capacity for improved ABET delivery has thus been achieved to only a limited extent. The position should improve in 2001, with the new intake of Certificate students, the majority of whom are employed in PALCs.

Overall, the impact of CACE courses on the practices of students in the PALCs has been disappointing, especially with regard to the content and methodology of literacy classes. There is

evidence of good facilitation skills yet, in spite of the approach taken in the CACE training materials, the content of ABET classes is rarely directly linked to learners' needs outside the classroom or to development processes in the community.

Factors that influence facilitators' ability to CACE methodologies in ABET classes seem to fall into three categories:

- the lack of sufficient consultation and information-sharing between the different providers, partners and stakeholders involved in training facilitators;
- the degree to which the transfer of skills is promoted by the Certificate course; and
- a combination of institutional and contextual factors (see Chapter 4, section 3).

In the current context of state provision, the ***ABET for Development*** module did not equip students sufficiently to develop literacy skills or to implement learning programmes with development potential. However, CACE training is one of many influences on facilitators in PALCs. At present, adult learning principles, literacy teaching and contextual knowledge become submerged under the cumulative weight of policies, systems and requirements and there is little congruence between the CACE approach and ABET learning materials.

Recommendations

It is important to find ways of increasing the overlap between the ABET Unit's policies and practices and CACE's principles and approaches, and so to enable facilitators to work in ways which more effectively meet the national goals for ABET. Those involved in particular areas such as literacy or language should agree on a basic set of principles to ensure coherence.

CACE should place a much greater focus on developing an understanding of how to develop reading and writing skills that can be applied with different levels and contexts of ABET. Similarly, more time and practice is needed on translating community or individual needs and interests into learning materials. However, there are two constraints on this: first, the learning hours for the Certificate have been substantially reduced by the demands of accreditation on the NQF; and second, it is uncertain how successful new or inexperienced facilitators can be in developing learning programmes.

The ABET Unit should ensure that literacy methodologies promoted in the PALCs integrate the current phonics-based approach with reading and writing for meaning, since these approaches seem to be more successful in motivating and retaining learners. It should also consider training CPMs and regional coordinators to offer pedagogical support to facilitators. Finally, it should improve channels of communication with facilitators and find ways of reducing the negative effect the nine-month contract has on the stability and motivation of the facilitators.

The Multi-Purpose Community Centre proposed by the ABET Unit as a model for PALCs in future and defined as 'a learning site which enables communities to manage their own development, by providing access to appropriate information, facilities, resources, training and services' (Baatjes 2000:11) is more likely to achieve the goals for ABET as outlined in National Policy documents. If this vision takes root, there will be more scope for the kinds of learning and skills that students acquire on the Certificate course. National Unit Standards will also need to be modified so that they do more to foster links between ABET and development.

CHAPTER 5 – CACE STUDENTS AS DEVELOPMENT WORKERS

The two main findings in this chapter are: the extent and variety of student involvement in development, and the number of past students – particularly women – in leadership positions. CACE students are involved in every aspect of development, from income-generation to environmental justice. Many play multiple roles. They work in a range of contexts and in sectors such as Health and Social Services. Difficulties arise in sustaining projects, and in some cases it is too early to assess the extent to which an initiative can have a permanent impact. Nevertheless, many have developed successful initiatives and found imaginative ways to contribute to communities, sometimes taking on new leadership roles. All are adamant that their confidence and skills are a result of CACE courses.

There is no correlation between completing either course and community involvement; many of those who dropped out are very active in their communities. There is, however, a marked difference in the level of involvement between Advanced Diploma students (64%) and Certificate students (84%). While community or adult education experience was a requirement in the first cycle of the Certificate, many students in the second cycle were young matriculants with no prior experience. This seems to confirm the success of the course in building confidence, motivating students and nurturing a sense of social responsibility.

Educational impact

Students managed to pass on their skills to at least 200 learners in small businesses and subsequently to a much larger number of people through their involvement in community organisations. Furthermore, the networks originally created by the Certificate course are still sustained as problem-solving and morale-boosting support systems.

Economic impact

The biggest proportion of students (18%) is involved in small business development, most on a voluntary basis. This indicates the value of the ***Training Small Business Developers*** module introduced in the second cycle. Thirteen successful small businesses were identified, involving only women (with one exception). Most of the projects (72%) were in rural areas.

Students have also assisted with business plans for local government and other initiatives such as poverty alleviation projects and raising funds for schools. Others have contributed through skills training and job creation projects.

The majority of initiatives are geared to the unskilled and unemployed. Many projects are constrained by the lack of macro-economic development in small towns such as Noupoort and Victoria West; a single project is not sufficient to change patterns of cash flow without an integrated and resourced development plan.

Social impact

Students in the Departments of Health, Labour and Social Services have been particularly successful in implementing development-oriented approaches to their work in communities. Projects show participatory planning and decision-making and have promoted the development of skills and structures within communities. They also show an understanding of integrated development, connecting family health to income-generation, for example. By the end of the research period, five Certificate students had been elected to local government positions. All attribute their achievement without hesitation to their CACE studies. Such students hold great potential for improving the quality of governance and making resources available to marginalised communities. As several of them were only elected in November 2001, it is too early to assess their effectiveness.

Gender impacts

Of the past women students in the sample, 39 are involved in various development initiatives and community organisations, six of them as initiators. Of those involved in small business projects, 65% are female, and all but one are in rural areas. Of the students elected as local councillors, all but one are women. Other women are involved in skills training. In contrast, the number of male respondents not involved in any development initiatives is twice that of female respondents. This seems to underline the steadily increasing role of women in building the economic and social future of rural communities.

Conclusion

Factors that appear to influence the success of CACE students in community projects include their motivation and experience prior to the course, modules that are informed by local community needs, a participatory methodology that encourages critical and creative thinking skills, and an assessment policy that requires students to demonstrate their abilities in community contexts.

Aspects that need further consideration in order to enhance sustainability include:

- promoting closer ties between sectors involved in adult education;
- strengthening students' abilities to critically engage with or challenge the social and political environments within which they work;
- strengthening the financial skills of the ***Training Small Business Developers***;
- ensuring that courses offered at PALCs support learners' participation in income-generating projects and wider development processes.

CHAPTER 6 – CASE STUDIES: NOUPOORT AND CARNARVON

The aim of the two case studies is to describe and compare the provision of ABET in two different communities, to identify some of the ingredients of success and failure, and to gauge the extent to which ABET has contributed to development in the surrounding community. Noupoort and Carnarvon were selected as examples of small rural towns with struggling economies and relatively large clusters of past CACE students.

The overall conclusion is that a larger number of CACE students in such towns does not necessarily lead to better ABET provision, nor to a greater degree of development activity: other personal and contextual factors are of greater significance. In more enabling contexts, one or two students working alone can achieve more.

Some of the factors that inhibit students' impact are:

- a weak macro-economic context and the lack of an inclusive development plan;
- factionalism and power struggles between and within communities (one town);
- competing visions for ABET between the Department of Education and CACE students, between 'schooled' literacy and a more development-oriented approach (one town);
- the lack of consultation and communication between grassroots ABET workers and provincial levels of ABET;
- the lack of technical skills and immediately useful knowledge at the lower levels of ABET; and
- facilitators not being sufficiently equipped to create learning programmes linked to

development needs.

Some of the factors that keep learners in the ABET centres include:

- learners' involvement in small businesses or in structures such as learning centre governing bodies;
- the acquisition of functional literacy skills (post Level 1); and
- extra-curricular information from facilitators on accessing rights and services.

Suggestions for enhancing the potential of ABET include:

- proclaiming ABET publicly as a non-partisan project;
- creating a resourced, transparent coordinating structure with mechanisms for consultation and conflict resolution;
- developing an ABET plan based on a participatory analysis of community needs;
- developing a more prestigious identity for adult learning centres;
- using the potential of Advanced Diploma students to run workshops and short courses; and
- offering technical skills training to learners at all ABET levels.

CHAPTER 7 – CONCLUSION

In spite of a disappointing impact on ABET provision so far, the remarkable levels of achievements by students working in development contexts seem to justify the broad generic nature of the CACE programmes. While adjustments to the courses can no doubt iron out weaknesses and enable a stronger impact on formal ABET provision in future, it is possible that students' contributions to communities through creating skills and building resources are ultimately more important at this stage in South Africa's development.

1 RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Northern Cape context[1]

The Northern Cape is the largest province in South Africa. Despite its size, it has the lowest population density with only 2,1% of South Africa's population or 840 321 people:

- 77% live in and around urban areas while the remaining 23% are spread across the vast rural areas;
- 67,7% of the population speaks Afrikaans, followed by Setswana (18,3%), isiXhosa (8,8 %) and English (2,5%). The remaining 2,7% speak other languages; and
- 53% of the population is coloured while 30% is African (the Northern Cape is one of only two provinces in which coloureds are in the majority compared to the other seven provinces where Africans form the majority population group).

The economy of the Northern Cape is the smallest in the country and contributes only 2,1% to the gross geographic product (GGP) of South Africa. The provincial economy is driven mainly by mining, agriculture, manufacturing and services, with mining and services contributing 37% of the provincial GGP, but all these sectors have been in decline since 1980. The economic activity is highly concentrated with five out of 26 districts contributing more than 70% of the total GGP. A large proportion of those employed in the Northern Cape's formal economic sector (31%) are found in agriculture, while 27% work in the personal services sector, 15% in trade, catering and accommodation, and 7% in the mining and quarrying sector. In 1994 27% of the economically active population was unemployed. Estimates of unemployment in 2000 are similar. Activities that may contribute to economic development in the province in future are mining, agriculture, the agro-industry and tourism.

Of the adult population, 97 692 or 21,7% of those aged 20 and older have no schooling at all, slightly higher than the national average of 19,3%, and overall 192 263 people or 43% of the population have less than a Grade 7 education (Houghton and Aitchison 1999: 7).

There is extreme inequality in the distribution of income among different races in the Northern Cape[2]. There are also marked disparities in income between male and female-headed households and between urban and rural households. Other social and economic indicators such as access to information and communication services, health services, water and sanitation follow the same pattern of unequal distribution and underdevelopment, except that 85,6% of the population have formal housing.

The Northern Cape has been an ANC-controlled province since the 1994 elections. However, many local councils are still dominated by those who formerly voted for the Nationalist Party and now fall under the banner of the Democratic Alliance.

1.2 Background to the partnership

In 1994 the newly elected ANC government in the newly constituted province of the Northern Cape had to start building an infrastructure from scratch. Adult education and training was seen as a crucial component in all aspects of reconstruction and development, including meeting basic needs, developing human resources, building the economy, and democratising the state and civic society. In 1996 the Northern Cape Department of Education in the form of the ABET Unit (then the AET

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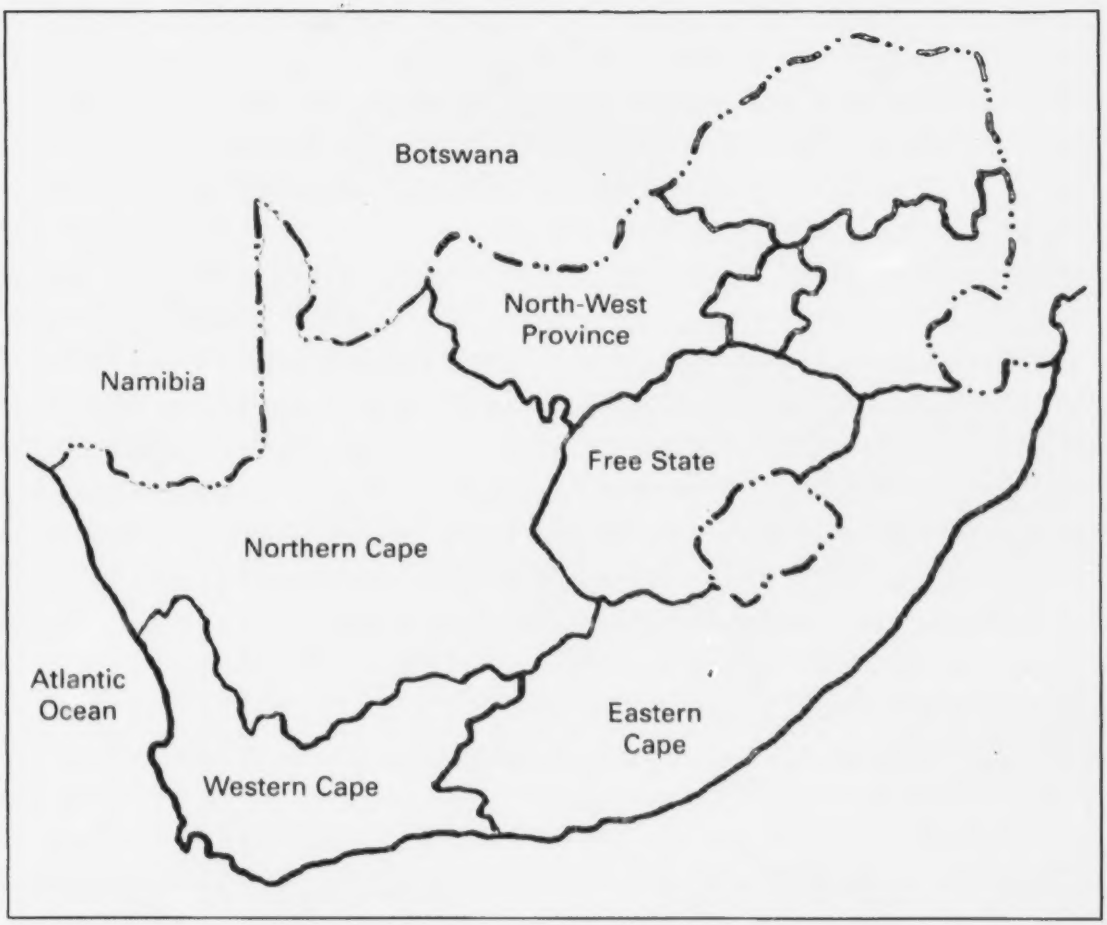

Map 1.1 The Northern Cape

Division), supported by Department for International Development in South Africa (DFID, then the Overseas Development Agency or ODA), Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) and other donors began work on a ground-breaking capacity-building project to make adult education and training available to the most marginalised sectors in the Northern Cape. To implement this aim the Department of Education formed a partnership with the Centre for Adult and Continuing Education (CACE) at the University of the Western Cape.

The project was given the following objectives:

- to assist the advancement of systematic professional training of adult educators, trainers and development practitioners in order to enable them to deliver adult basic education and training (ABET) more effectively;
- to help to build up the capacity of professional staff to implement new technologies implicit in an integrated system of education and training within the National Qualifications Framework (NQF); and
- to help develop sustainable capacity to enable delivery of improved ABET programmes. (*ODA Project Memorandum*, February 1997).

To fulfil these objectives, the partnership was given the task of training 100 Education, Training and Development practitioners (ETDPs) at Certificate level and 50 practitioners at Advanced Diploma

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level. Between February 1996 and December 1999, CACE provided two cycles of ABET programmes at Certificate and Advanced Diploma levels.

The *Certificate Course* was a two-year part-time distance education programme intended to prepare community workers with no experience of tertiary education as ETDPs. The aim was to provide them with the necessary skills and knowledge to work as community developers in the field of ABET in the province. The mode of delivery was predominantly face-to-face through intensive residentially based study weekends, backed up by local study groups led by tutors who were trained in Kimberley by CACE. Although the main emphasis of the programme was on the attainment of generic skills (organising skills, facilitation skills, understanding the contexts of adult learners), the second year of the second cycle was modified for the province to provide basic specialist practical training in research methods, literacy teaching and the promotion of small business skills.

The *Advanced Diploma*, also a two-year part-time course, combined distance education and resource-based learning. This course targeted ETDPs in public adult learning centres, non-governmental organisations, rural development organisations, government departments and industry and covered the practice of adult education; adult learning and teaching; curriculum design; and skills development facilitation. The major objectives of the Advanced Diploma were to enable students to develop an understanding of their societal and organisational contexts and to equip them with the skills and methods to creatively facilitate adult learning.

The CACE programme outlined above gradually developed a momentum of its own, generated by the situations and the community contexts of course participants. Modules presented at study weekends and to study groups were positively evaluated by students and in many instances the people who worked in collegial or supervisory capacities with students reported positive outcomes and asked for further courses to be provided. Broadly speaking, the partners considered the project to have been successful, and it exceeded its goals in terms of the number of practitioners trained: over the four years 311 students and 18 tutors took part in the two CACE courses.

2. THE RATIONALE FOR THE RESEARCH

The original proposal for the partnership included an impact study and a dissemination conference. This report describes the findings of the impact study and a conference was held in Kimberley on 17–18 April 2001 to disseminate the findings more broadly and to take the research process forward.

The study was designed to investigate the impact of the courses in three broad areas:

- on the personal and professional lives of students;
- on the delivery of ABET to learners in the province (within the ABET Unit as well as in other sectors and contexts); and
- on students' work in communities.

The Northern Cape presents a favourable opportunity to conduct such a study, firstly, because the majority of students had not attended similar courses, and secondly, because the province is sparsely populated and communities are relatively small. Past students would be relatively easy to trace, and the courses' impact easier to establish than, for instance, in the Western Cape.

3. THE PROBLEM UNDER INVESTIGATION

The central concern, as defined in the research proposal submitted to DFID, was to address the question of whether the aims of the two courses were appropriate to a Northern Cape context. In order to produce information useful to workers and stakeholders, the longer term influence of the courses on students was to be evaluated in terms of ABET outcomes statements expressed in NQF documents. More generally, the success of the project was to be assessed in terms of the developmental needs expressed by past students, as members of their communities.

4. THE PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

The research had two primary aims:

1. To describe the ways in which the AET/CACE capacity building project has affected the training practices and lives of past students.
2. To document and analyse the problems and successes of implementing capacity building ABET training in the province.

Listed as important subsidiary factors underlying the main aims were the following issues:

- Gender and equity in relation to course recruitment and throughput rates, together with the attendant impact on the communities involved in the course.
- Instructional and assessment approaches and practices in relation to students from a variety of educational cultural and linguistic backgrounds.
- Policy issues, particularly to do with the professional development and empowerment of local personnel.

5. THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research questions were as follows:

1. To what extent have programmes facilitated by CACE fitted the needs of participants and their communities in terms of personal careers and ETDPs?
2. To what extent has curriculum material been of use to participants in their work or communities?
3. To what extent have CACE alumni contributed to public adult learning centres?
4. How successfully has development been linked in the work of alumni?
5. Were the ideas and intentions appropriate for the environment – both social and educational – of students on the course?
6. What were the differences in impact between the 1997 and 1999 deliveries of the programme?
7. What is the relationship between the CACE training and the AET Division's INSET training, and how could these two processes be more mutually supportive?
8. What training is still needed?
9. What have been the unintended consequences of the courses?
10. What benefits have alumni brought to the ABET project and its learners?

Two issues stood out most strongly from early interviews and observations and these became increasingly important as the research progressed.

1. A difference emerged between students' ability to apply what they learnt in community-based contexts and their ability to apply these skills in the more formal environment of the public adult learning centres. Students working in development contexts were successful in applying skills and knowledge in a wide range of projects and structures. However, there was little evidence of transformation in teaching of literacy in adult learning centres. Despite the approach taken in the CACE training materials, the content of ABET classes was rarely directly linked to learners' needs outside the classroom and even more rarely to development processes in the community. The exception to this was the Small Business Module offered at ABET Level 4.

2. It became evident that the communities in which there were clusters of CACE students were not necessarily the communities in which a greater variety of development processes were underway.

Research strategies in the later phases of the research were designed to explore some of the reasons for these findings.

6. THE RESEARCH PROCESS

6.1 The research approach

As specified in the research proposal, the methodology used was mainly but not exclusively qualitative, using a mix of questionnaires, open-ended and semi-structured interviews and focus groups. For the semi-structured interviews, purposive sampling was used to identify groups of students according to geographical location, course, gender, language, and whether or not they completed the courses.

A team of seven local assistant researchers was identified and trained in Kimberley. Six of these were past CACE students; two were from the Certificate course and four from the Advanced Diploma. The seventh had been a Certificate tutor (as had the four Advanced Diploma students).

Assistants were identified on the basis of language, gender, and urban or rural location. Initially, three of the four Northern Cape regions were covered; the Springbok region was used at a later stage for comparative purposes. There were obvious advantages and disadvantages to using CACE students as researchers. The advantages were that the students were relatively easy to contact; they were familiar with CACE, its aims, and some of the teaching and learning modules that were taught on the courses; and they required less training than people with no previous contact with the courses.

Disadvantages included the possibility of bias through the students' own experiences of the course and, in the case of tutors, their knowledge of the students interviewed. In order to minimise these possibilities, wherever possible researchers were matched with students from a different area and transcripts of interviews were checked for potential prejudices and the slanting of interpretations.

Although every care has been taken to reflect accurately what researchers heard and observed, certain factors will inevitably have affected the process. The three most important of these are:

- *The number of languages spoken by informants:* All researchers spoke at least two of the four main languages spoken in the Northern Cape but, despite efforts to match researchers with informants, distance and location meant that sometimes a researcher had to interview someone in a language in which they and/or their informant were not comfortable. The difficulties of transcribing and translating African language interviews in the time available meant that the majority of interviews were in English or Afrikaans. For the three interviews

conducted in other languages, we relied on the researchers' notes. Without these constraints, the interviews would probably have yielded richer and more nuanced information.

- *The time of year at which the research was conducted:* The research took place during the six months from September 2000 to February 2001. Observations were carried out from September to November, the first set just before the spring break, and later at a time when classes were drawing to a close and learners were preparing for exams. The findings may have been very different if classes had been observed at a different time of year, for example, at the beginning of the year when learners' and facilitators' motivation and interest were high or in the middle of the year as learning groups were settling into a routine. During November, in one site, mass meetings around the local elections planned for early December were given as the reason why many learners did not come to their classes.
- *The external researchers' background in ABET:* The external researcher's background in NGO, community-based and trade union education, educator training, and national curriculum policy processes inevitably influences his/her perceptions of facilitator performance and learning or training materials. Another researcher with a different background may not see the same problems or raise the same concerns.

6.2 The research steps

The research process included the following steps:

1 Pilot phase

Initial exploratory, open-ended interviews were conducted with past CACE students in the De Aar region. Observations of ABET classes (Levels 1 and 2) were carried out in two sites (Four classes). Discussions with learners were held in both sites. This was a pilot phase to establish what we needed to investigate and to plan the methodology in more detail. This phase also included initial interviews with CACE and Department of Education (ABET Unit) staff.

Information obtained during this phase guided the development of the questionnaire.

2 Questionnaire sent to Advanced Diploma and Certificate students

A questionnaire was drawn up and sent to all Northern Cape students (see Appendix 1). A 27% overall response rate was achieved. Responses did not need weighting either for urban bias, gender or language as they were consistent with the spread of the full sample of students (D. Budlender, statistics expert, personal communication, 01/02/01).

The extremely slow or non-delivery of post in the Northern Cape was clearly one factor that affected the response rate. Had all students received the questionnaire, the rate probably would have been higher. Many students interviewed in the next phase of the research said they would like to fill in a questionnaire but had not received one. Researchers handed out questionnaires in the areas where they conducted interviews and another ten trickled in – these were read through to check for any interesting or unusual responses but were not included in the sample used for analysing patterns.

3 Further interviews, observations and document analysis

Further interviews were conducted with students in other Northern Cape regions and with CACE and ABET Unit staff. Another nine observations of ABET classes at Levels 1–4 were carried out in other regions (Kimberley and Upington), one of a facilitator who was not trained by CACE. Document analysis continued.

4 Assistant researchers identified and trained; semi-structured interview schedule created

Six past CACE students and one tutor were selected on the basis of language, gender, region, and urban or rural location. The semi-structured interview schedule was drawn up to gather more detailed

information about the impact of CACE courses on students' lives and careers and about factors that helped or hindered them in ABET or development work. It also aimed to probe specific issues that were emerging such as the lack of transfer of CACE literacy training in the context of the Public Adult Learning Centres and the lack of a direct link between ABET classes and development processes. Researchers were asked to seek out instances to disprove these findings.

Researchers were allocated to five sites: one urban, the rest rural (the town of Upington was considered rural). Each was asked to:

- interview at least five students (two Certificate students, two Advanced Diploma students, and at least one person who did not complete one of the courses);
- locate and interview an informant in the workplace or community who could provide another perspective on one student for triangulation purposes;
- conduct an observation of the same student in action at work or in a community context; and
- collect a variety of supporting documentation.

Altogether, 96 past students were interviewed and 30% (74) of all Certificate students were interviewed. Of these, 12% (nine) had not completed the course, 38% (28) were from the first cycle and 62 % (46) from the second. This is consistent with the greater numbers of students in the second cycle. Seven were students who went on to study for the Advanced Diploma. For the Advanced Diploma, 32% (29) students were interviewed, including 11 students who did not complete the course. 31% were from the first cycle and 69% from the second[3].

5 Reportback and joint analysis

Researchers reported back on their findings at a meeting at the end of November 2000 and a summary of emerging issues was drawn up for further investigation. Some issues were taken to CACE and the ABET Unit for discussion and to elicit alternative perspectives. Other issues informed the case studies and interviews with stakeholders.

6 Case studies

Two sites, Noupoort and Carnarvon, were selected for further investigation (see Chapter 6). Both these sites had relatively large numbers of CACE students. In Noupoort, ABET provision was functioning relatively well but there was little evidence of broader development. In Carnarvon, there was no ABET or development taking place at all.

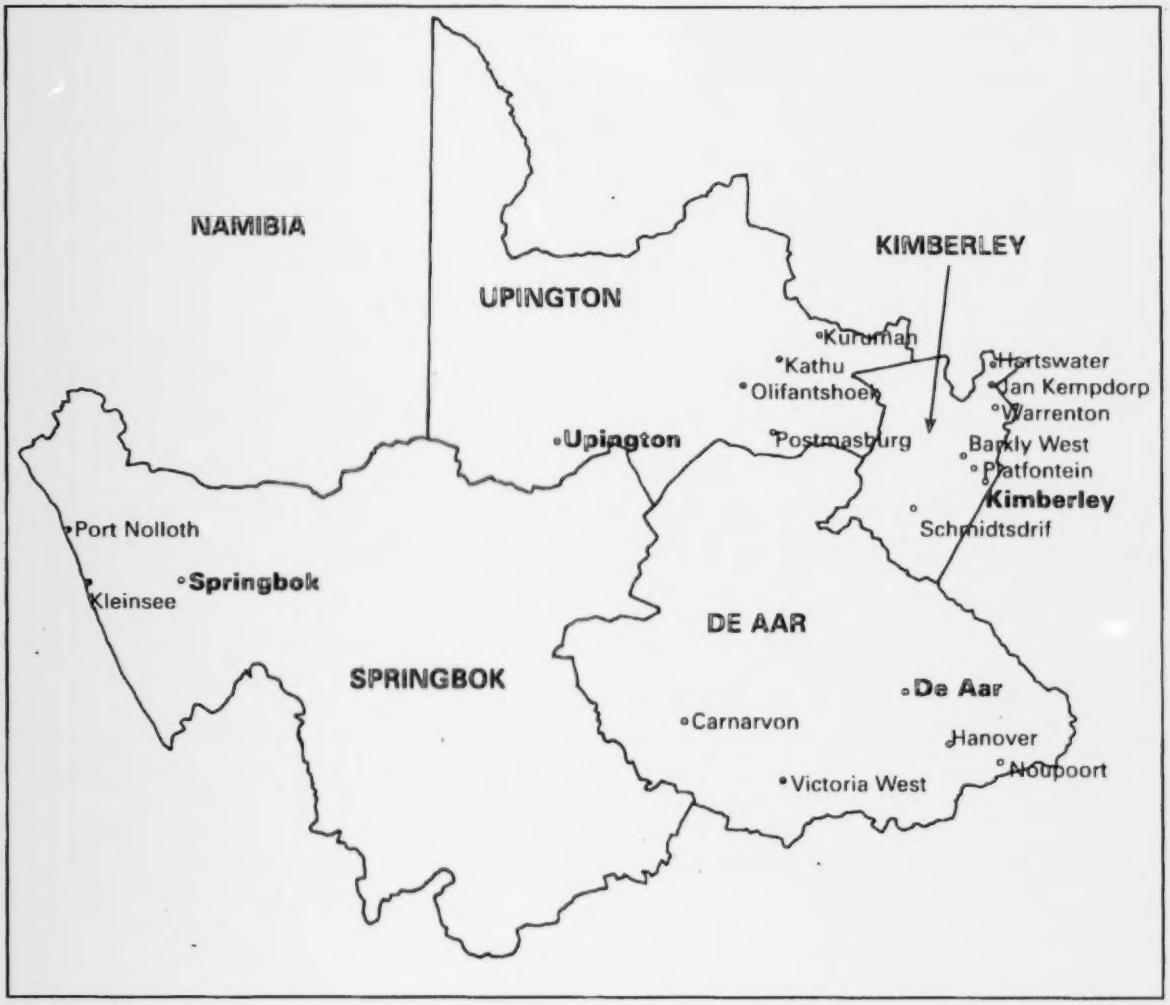
The purpose of the case studies was to describe and compare the provision of ABET in two different communities and to try and distil some of the necessary ingredients for success. In both instances the relative success or failure of ABET provision was located within a broader contextual analysis of the towns as sites for social and economic development.

7 Comparative interviews in Springbok

A further seven students were interviewed in the Springbok region early in January to compare emerging findings and identify any issues specific to the Springbok region.

8 Data analysis and interpretation

During this time, the data was analysed and interpreted on an ongoing basis. The database was checked three times and queries run with the help of a statistics expert, Debbie Budlender. Interviews were transcribed and coded with the help of UWC Masters students. Two other writers helped with analysing and summarising the data.



Map 1.2 Northern Cape research sites

9 Follow-up interviews with ABET stakeholders

Interviews to check findings with stakeholders and to pursue some issues in greater depth were held with representatives of Correctional Services, Social Services, the De Beers ABET mining network and two literacy NGOs, as well as with an ABET Unit regional coordinator, the ABET Unit training coordinator, and a member of the core training team (mother-tongue literacy).

10 Stakeholder symposium

A stakeholder symposium was held in Kimberley in February 2001 to present the initial findings of the research and to ask for alternative interpretations for some of the data.

11 Dissemination conference

A conference was held in Kimberley on 17–18 April 2001 to present the report, take responses, and discuss how to take the findings of the report further. This conference was attended by representatives from almost all ABET role players in the Northern Cape and resulted in a set of recommendations to the Provincial Government and Department of Education (ABET Unit). These are listed in the last section of this report, the *Afterword*.

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7. THE SCOPE OF THE RESEARCH

The study was limited to the two CACE courses, CACE alumni and the immediate environments specified by the course participants themselves. The primary focus of the investigation was confined to students and tutors on the courses. Information from other members of the partnership, employers, co-workers, learners, and other ABET stakeholders was collected to verify and further illuminate information received or to provide alternative perspectives on emerging issues. Wherever possible, documentary evidence was examined.

The findings in this study, therefore, relate to the impacts that the two courses have had on past students' personal lives, careers and study plans; their practices in the ABET unit or other adult education sectors; and their involvement in development activities. While a huge amount of valuable information about adult learning centres, learners' experiences of ABET, learners themselves, their reasons for coming to class and for dropping out, community concerns and issues has been collected in the course of this study, we have only been able to include such information where it relates directly to the questions of impact outlined above.

8. ISSUES CONCERNING IMPACT STUDIES

It is almost impossible to claim direct impact of any course on an adult student, as adults bring with them a history of previous educational and work experiences, all of which exert an influence on their ideas and practices in various ways. In the case of the Certificate course, many respondents were adamant that various achievements, both personal and professional, could be directly related to the course and this may be so, since for many this was the first exposure to any kind of education after leaving school. For post-graduate students however, the fingerprints of the course are harder to decipher with any certainty.

In addition, some effects take many years to emerge, particularly in the slowly changing economic and political context of small rural towns: several students who studied three years ago are now moving into positions of leadership in communities, but it has taken several years of sustained work on their part to get to this position. It is, therefore, too soon to see the overall pattern. In some communities local councils are still controlled by conservative forces who are not willing to consider the development needs of the poorer communities and students trying to start development initiatives thus face both economic and political barriers. Each context varies enormously.

Names have been changed although no respondent expressed a desire to remain anonymous.

9. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The findings in this report are derived from an empirically grounded set of assumptions based on the evidence of documents, questionnaires, interviews and observations.

We attempt to represent accurately the views, insights and experiences of all the participants in the research, and to reflect these back to them and others for critical analysis. The investigation took place during a period of intense social and educational change, as the new Department of Education geared up to take on the challenge of ABET. The complexity of the various social, economic and political contexts makes it exceptionally difficult to be fair to all parties who have different experiences and points of view. Part of the aim is to analyse the ways that these features have impacted on students' abilities to act in the fields of ABET and development, and in the largely uncharted land between. We seek to identify the disjunctions and contradictions in participants' experiences (Candy 1989:7), in the hope that this can assist in the ongoing challenge of transformation.

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10. DEFINITIONS AND TERMINOLOGY

The report uses the following definitions:

'Adult basic education and training (ABET)'

Adult basic education and training is the general conceptual foundation towards lifelong learning and development, comprising knowledge, skills and attitudes required for social, economic and political participation and transformation applicable to a range of contexts. ABET is flexible, developmental and targeted at the specific needs of particular audiences and ideally provides access to nationally recognised certificates.
(Department of Education, Directorate Adult Education and Training 1997)

'The ABET project'

This term refers to all forms and contexts of adult based education and training, including formal ABET provision by the Department of Education and other sectors such as NGOs and Correctional Services, as well as adult education processes and initiatives in the wider community development context.

'ABET system'

In this report 'the ABET system' is used to refer to ABET provision by the Department of Education. It includes the ABET Unit, its regional coordinators, Cluster Programme Managers, and facilitators in adult learning centres. (See Appendix 7 for a graphical representation of the different levels of the system.) ABET provision in other sectors such as NGOs or Correctional Services is referred to separately.

'Development'

Development is a process rather than the delivery of a set of products to individual people; it is about empowering people and communities with the skills, knowledge and capacity to act and engage at the local level; it is about gaining control over resources, especially at the local level; it is about producing the goods needed (e.g. houses) on a sustainable basis, and about distributing these goods justly; it is about meeting basic needs and continuously improving the lives of as many people as possible.
(ERIP cited in Centre for Adult and Continuing Education 1999:16)

'Cycle'

The term 'cycle' refers to each of the two-year periods over which CACE courses were delivered in the Northern Cape, that is, the 1996–97 cycle and the 1998–99 cycle.

'Students'

The term 'students' refers to all past CACE students of the two cycles described above. This term was considered appropriate, since it covers all who participated on CACE courses, whether or not they completed them. 'Alumni' was considered alienating, while the term 'graduates' excludes those who have completed different components of the course, but have not yet received a final certificate.

2 THE ADVANCED DIPLOMA

'I trained as a teacher but only after CACE I felt I am an educator.'

(Advanced Diploma student and tutor)

Summary

This chapter describes the experiences of Advanced Diploma graduates and discusses the impact of the course on their personal and professional lives. It covers the ABET sector as well as other development initiatives.

New regional policies in 1997 specified that no teacher could hold two jobs. This policy was gradually phased in, eventually excluding the majority of Advanced Diploma graduates from the ABET sector and limiting the impact of the course within the province. Only eight out of 54 graduates currently work in formal ABET provision, three of them in sectors other than the Department of Education. The course has, however, created a reservoir of skills waiting to be tapped. Those active in development projects, even those who did not complete the course, draw on skills and knowledge that they acquired.

Impact-related achievements of the course:

- rigorous standards;
- the expansion of students' vision of their potential roles in education and work contexts;
- the use of a powerful model for designing learning interventions that students have been able to apply in a wide variety of contexts;
- an improvement in students' facilitation skills; and
- the promotion of tolerance and human dignity.

Impacts recorded by CACE Advanced Diploma students

- an increased understanding of work processes, together with greater confidence and an ability to transform existing work practices;
- academic skills and confidence to pursue further studies; and
- increased efficiency and responsiveness of the ABET Unit.

Aspects that merit further consideration in the light of this study:

- tightening the relationship between the Advanced Diploma and the new Diploma and Certificate courses to ensure a coherent capacity-building strategy;
- exploring the systemic, logistical and curricular mechanisms for linking ABET and development;
- paying greater attention to the integration of education and training; and
- including more focus on contexts and the local application of course modules.

1. OVERVIEW OF THE ADVANCED DIPLOMA

The Advanced Diploma was run five times in the Western Cape prior to its first implementation in the Northern Cape. In 1995 CACE commissioned a needs analysis conducted by the Centre for Adult Education of the University of Natal to inform the partnership between the Department of Education in the Northern Cape and CACE. Using information from this analysis, the curriculum was adapted, where possible, to the contexts of students in the province. While adult education was considered by all members of the partnership to be a powerful force for transformation, the exact shape it would take as the province developed and the opportunities that would open for graduates were not clear.

1.1 Aims

The following extracts clarify the aims of the Advanced Diploma: an extract from the Advanced Diploma brochure for the Northern Cape (1996–7) and an outline of the modules offered. Sample outcomes are attached in Appendix 4.

> *'The challenges for education and training in South Africa are very great. In the Northern Cape they are even more demanding because of distance, scattered population and historical imbalances in educational provision.*
>
> *The Northern Cape Education Department is concerned to develop an effective and broad adult basic education and training system to begin to address these challenges. Adult education and training is a crucial component in all the tasks of reconstruction and development, be it meeting basic needs, developing human resources, building the economy, or democratising the state and civic society. The role of the Education, Training and Development practitioner (ETDP) is then also crucial in implementing reconstruction ... .*
>
> *The course is aimed at people who are concerned with the education of adults in NGOs, state institutions or business organisations in the fields of ABET, Community Education and Development, Human Resource Development, Tertiary Education, Health and Primary Health Care Education, Early Childhood Development, Income Generation and Small Business Development, Reconstruction and Development Planning and Administration of ABET.*
>
> *The course aims to enhance your skills as a practitioner and your understanding of theoretical debates in the field.'*
>
> (extract from Advanced Diploma brochure, Northern Cape 1996–7)

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Outline of four modules offered during each two-year cycle

Module 1 – Adult Basic Education and Training: included

- an orientation to ABET and its various definitions;
- an understanding of common beliefs, visions and myths about literacy and ABET;
- curriculum, assessment and accreditation issues for ABET learners; and
- training and accreditation of ABET practitioners.

Module 2 – Adult Education and Training – Theory and Practices: included

- workshop design and facilitation, group facilitation theory and skills;
- course and curriculum development learning theory, evaluation;
- literacy, language, and basic education; and
- processes of setting up an ABET project.

Module 3 – Adult Education and Training in Transition: Transforming Policy, Transforming Society: included

- analysis of the relationship between adult education and training policy and social transformation in South Africa.

Module 4 –Your Organisation, Your Role: included

- analysis of organisational dynamics, theory of organisation and change; and
- interventions for organisational development, affirmative action and staff development, writing business plans.

(Sources: Advanced Diploma brochure 1996; Advanced Diploma course outline, undated)

1.2 Learning processes

Not all training materials used on the course were available to the researcher. Those that were examined generally show a commitment to promoting active learning and to modelling sound teaching and learning processes, both through the learning materials and through training sessions. Evaluation tasks are built into most of the materials and encourage critical reflection and learning to learn skills. There is a mixture of assessment tasks: some requiring practical application of skills in context, others requiring long academic-type essays. The experiential learning cycle (experience-reflection-knowledge) underpins at least two of the modules.

1.3 Delivery model – organisation and academic support

This was a mixed-mode course, a combination of distance education and face-to-face teaching. Work consisted of studying prepared course materials and submitting regular assignments, and then engaging intensively with course materials during study weekends. Six four-day study weekends were held each year. Where possible, students were encouraged to set up local study circles.

1.4 Entry requirements and costs

The entry requirement was Matric plus a three-year qualification (two years in exceptional cases) and experience as an educator, trainer or development practitioner in a formal or non-formal organisation.

The cost of the course in 1996–7 was R2 630 and in 1998–9 was R3 156 (a 20% increase). Bursaries were available for all students in 1996–7 although they were required to pay a R40 admission fee and a R185 registration fee. In 1998–9 only those students who were employed by the Department of Education or Correctional Services received 100% bursaries. Others received partial bursaries covering 70% of tuition fees. Bursaries were awarded by CACE and funding was provided by the British DFID (Department for International Development in Southern Africa, then ODA), SIDA (Swedish International Development Agency), the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, The Joint Education Trust, The Independent Development Trust, and Engen.

2. RECRUITMENT

Initial recruitment for both the CACE courses offered in the Northern Cape was undertaken jointly by the Department of Education and CACE. At the beginning of 1996, Moira Marais-Martin of the Department of Education and Zelda Groener of CACE drove to many of the rural towns to spread information and recruit students. The first cycle of both courses drew from networks created during the social movements of the 1980s and early 1990s and had a stronger basis in civil society than the second. Information was also sent to all teacher training colleges and adult learning centres. Prior to 1996, adult classes were mainly facilitated by full-time teachers in day schools so their part-time employment gave them a gateway to the course.

By the start of the second cycle in 1998, ABET had become more institutionalised in the province and the majority of students were facilitators employed in the Department of Education. The start of the courses had to be delayed to accommodate developments within the ABET division of the provincial government. At the end of 1997 and the beginning of 1998, the policy for appointing adult educators was changed so that part-time posts could be freed for unemployed educators and matriculants. At the same time the national government's literacy campaign 'Ithuteng' had mobilised large numbers and facilitators were needed to take up newly created posts. As a result a large number of students in the second cycle consisted of young people straight out of college. Exact statistics are not available.

3. ADMISSION PROFILES: COMPARISON ACROSS TWO CYCLES

3.1 1996–7 cycle

In 1996 the first module started with seventeen students attending the first study weekend. By the second study weekend in April, 22 new students had joined. Of these 39 students, 34 remain on the database: Only 37% of students were women, one of them in a senior position in the Department of Education as opposed to four of the men who were in senior positions.

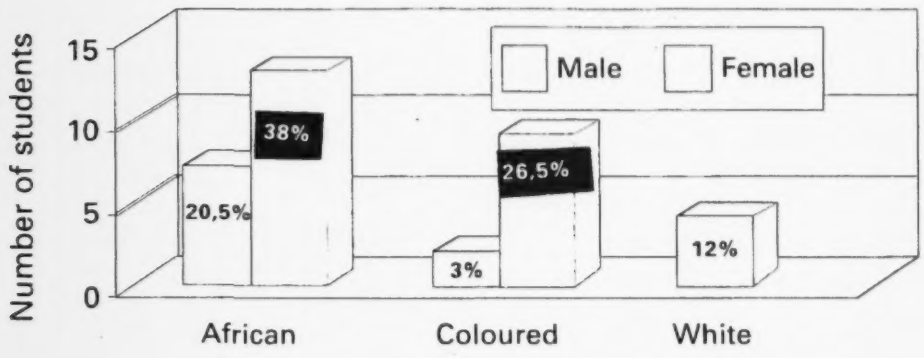

Figure 2.1 1996 Admission profile by race and gender

3.1.1 Rural/urban profile

In the first cycle 67% of students were from rural towns; nearly half were from the De Aar region and from one town in particular, Noupoort. Just under a third of those who registered for the course came from Noupoort. No informant could offer an explanation of why this proportion was so high, as information was sent to all adult learning centres and teacher training colleges in the province. Noupoort was selected as one of the case studies (described in Chapter 6 of this report) as we were curious to find out whether the high numbers of students in the town had had any particular impact on ABET provision or broader development in the area. There was one student each from the Springbok and Upington regions.

3.1.2 Language

There were equal numbers of Afrikaans and Xhosa speakers, with four speakers of Setswana. While the percentage of Xhosa speakers (44%) is high in comparison to the 8,8% of provincial statistics (1997 Annual School Survey), it is consistent with the higher proportion of Xhosa speakers in the De Aar region (28,3%) and the fact that just under half the students came from the De Aar region (ibid.).

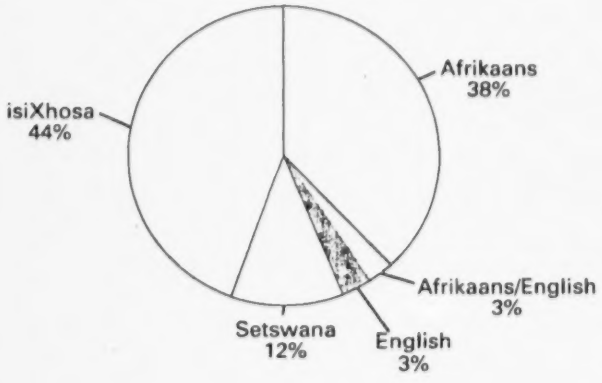

Figure 2.2 1996 Admission profile by language

3.1.3 Age

There is no information on the age range for either cycle (1996–7 or 1998–9), but information on questionnaires returned shows an equal spread of people in the 26–35 and 36–45 age groups with one each in the 46–55 and 56–65 age groups.

3.1.4 Prior qualifications and experience

Although information is not available on all students, at least eight students had first degrees, five had Higher Diplomas in Education, four had Senior Primary Diplomas and five had Primary Teaching Certificates. The majority of students were actively involved in ABET: most were formal schoolteachers working in Adult Learning Centres at night (20), while others were from NGOs (three) and industry (one). Three were senior education officials. Fourteen students had no experience in ABET or in any kind of mainstream adult education (Mid-year evaluation report, 1996).

3.2 1998-9 cycle

Fifty-six students registered for the second cycle of the Advanced Diploma. Of these, 46 remain on the database. The year had a delayed start because the Department of Education appointed several hundred part-time ABET facilitators to replace the schoolteachers who had previously been 'double-dipping' or teaching children during the day and adults at night. The mandate from the Premier was to appoint as many unemployed people as possible.

3.2.1 Rural/urban profile

A much larger proportion of students came from the Kimberley region than any other (48%) – this included ten students from the rural areas. There were four students from Upington, six from De Aar and two from Springbok. The smaller numbers of students from other regions would seem to be a result of distance, and corresponding difficulties with time and transport. There were also four students from the North-West province and one in Gauteng who had been moved by his employer, Correctional Services.

The admission profile shows almost equal numbers of men and women in the second cycle.

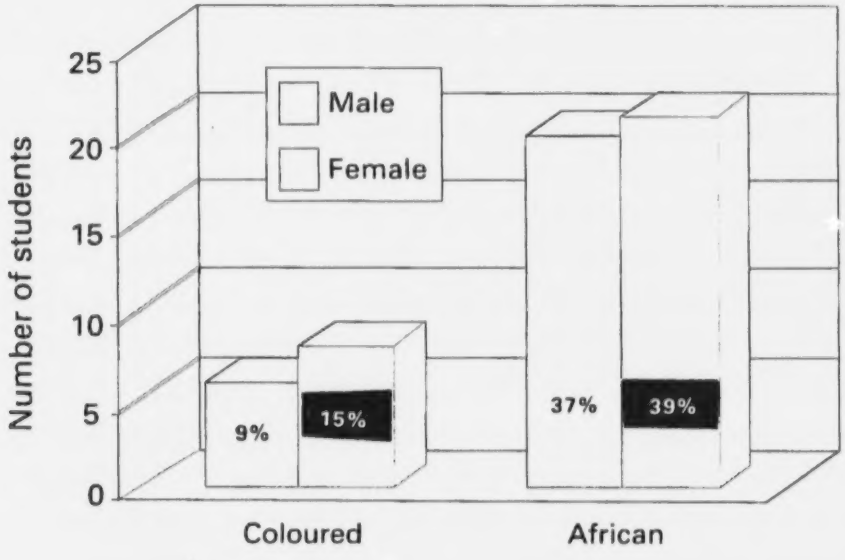

Figure 2.3 1998 Admission profile by race and gender

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3.2.2 Language profile

The language profile of students on the second cycle is as follows:

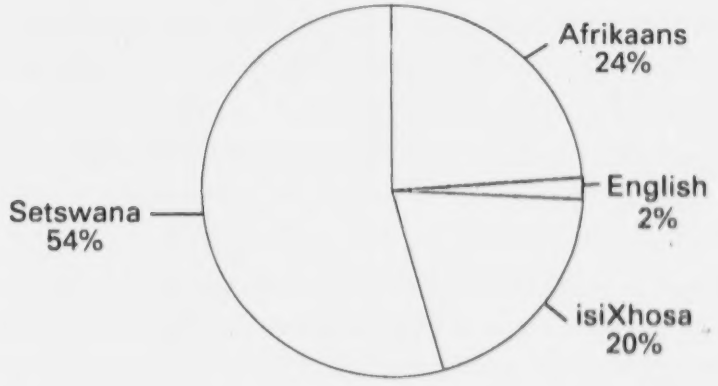

Figure 2.4 1998 Admission profile by language

Although Afrikaans speakers make up 67,7% of the Northern Cape language population, the percentage of Afrikaans speakers on the two courses averages 30%. The far higher numbers of African students on the courses could be a feature of previous lack of access to higher education and permanent teaching posts. The number of coloured educators in the Department of Education in 1998 was almost twice that of African Educators (1998 Snap Survey). In this cycle, the number of Setswana speakers increased to 54% in line with the greater proportion of students from the Kimberley region. The highest number of students were female Setswana speakers, almost all of whom were schoolteachers by day and ABET facilitators by night. The male Setswana speakers, while also mostly teachers, had a much wider range of work experience as did the men from other language groups. The narrower range of experience and lower rank reflect the gendered nature of employment in the Education sector at the time (1998 Snap Survey in EMIS Unit of the Northern Cape Department of Education 1998:28). This could be a significant motivating factor for female students: a new field with new work opportunities and the possibility of an increased income without having to wait for promotion within the existing department structures.

3.2.3 Prior qualifications and experience

The intake for the 1998–9 cycle included 30 Adult Education and Training (AET) staff: 24 were part-time facilitators, four belonged to the department's core training team, one was a Cluster Programme Manager and one worked in the AET head office[1]. A further 22 course members were a mixture of experienced schoolteachers, newly qualified schoolteachers, four people who were working in NGOs and two in the Correctional Services ABET Division (Narrative report on the CACE/Northern Cape province partnership May–Dec 1998). There is no information on four students who dropped out early.

Amongst the 1998–9 intake, eleven had a Junior Primary Teaching Certificate, and the others had three years or more of university or college study. Seven students who had completed the Certificate the previous year were accepted on to the Advanced Diploma.

3.3 Comparison across two cycles

Students in the first cycle were academically stronger, many of them mature educators, while in the second cycle many were 'just fresh from college and young and had no experience in adult education whatsoever' (course coordinator). The difference in academic qualifications and experience

was a challenge for both CACE staff and students on the course: 'for those people who never had the experience of either going to the college or to the university, it was difficult' (ABET Unit official); and 'for a person from Matric, and with community experience, that advanced diploma was very difficult' (ibid.).

4. MOTIVATION FOR TAKING THE COURSE

In 1996–7 most students were full-time teachers and took the course expecting that it would help them with their after-hours work in the adult centres. Most expected that eventually they would get an extra notch on the qualification scale and/or some form of financial benefit for this additional qualification. Motivation was largely pragmatic.

In 1998–9 there was a broader cross-section of students from a wider range of sectors. Of the seven students who came out of the Certificate course, four had NGO backgrounds, one had a commercial background, and one worked in an adult learning centre. One student had worked in an NGO resource centre and was then employed by Correctional Services. His interest in adult education stemmed from the work that he was doing in the community 'with people some of whom were illiterate and some unemployed'. These students' motives for studying were linked to an awareness of development needs.

Another group had a strong interest in adult education, although they were employed in formal schooling. Several others hoped to make a career change:

> *'The first time that the course was implemented or started in Kimberley, my brother-in-law was a lecturer at Perseverance and he brought the notices home and originally I was going to study with him, but due to the illness of my baby I was unable to do so and I only joined the group two years later. I am sorry that I didn't start earlier, because I'm sure the impact that the studies have had on me, I would have been a doctor in adult education already.'*

Yet others who were employed in formal schools saw the course as a means to help them promote parent involvement in school governance:

> *'My expectation was that it would help me, namely in the community where I currently teach to give the parents who come onto the governing body the opportunity to learn to read and write.'*
>
> (translated from Afrikaans)

At least one student (an ex-principal) had taken a retrenchment package and decided to try to address the 'huge gap' in illiteracy.

These students all had clear goal-oriented motives for joining the course. No students had purely personal goals, as all expected the course to have some benefit for those they were teaching. However, the responses indicate a continuum from largely work-related professional goals to strongly community-oriented social goals 'whereby the expected beneficiary is the community or society at large' (Courtney 1992:77). It is significant that those who expressed social goals most strongly were those who had completed the Certificate the previous year.

Another large group, however, those swept up by the drive to employ people without jobs, often found themselves on the course without any clear idea of why they were there:

> *'... school posts were not available so then I saw there is a chance for me to get in somewhere, I applied and I was successful – another lady told me about this course. Really I did not understand*

what was going on – you see I just wanted an opportunity. This maybe will get me somewhere in life. So I said OK let me try it out. I was fresh from College. I finished in 1997 when I started teaching. My intention wasn't to go into another study you see because I wanted to rest my mind a bit.'

(exit interview conducted by Zelda Groener in 1999)

This group participated largely as a result of outside pressures or influences, namely, the opportunity of work in a context of high unemployment, rather than from self-generated feelings of attraction, interest or professional necessity.

5. COMPLETION RATES AND RESULTS: COMPARISON ACROSS TWO CYCLES

5.1 1996–7 cycle

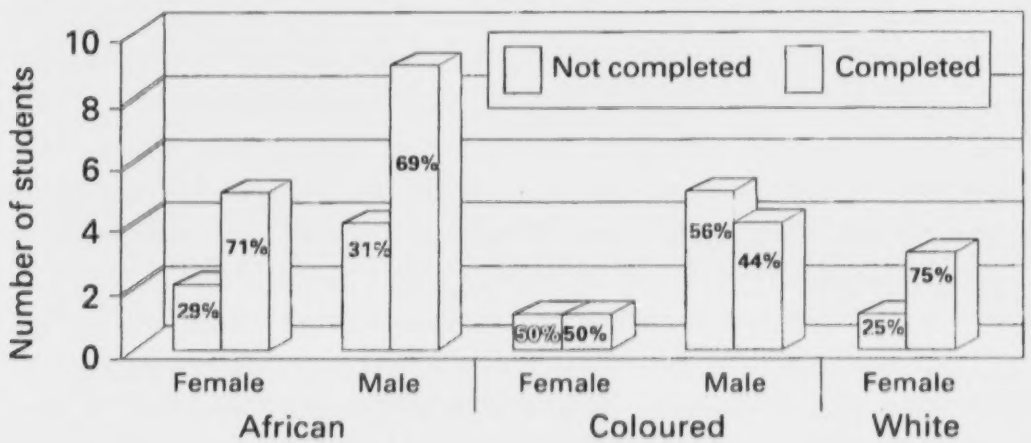

Figure 2.5 1996–7 Completion rate by race and gender[2]

In the 1996–7 cycle the overall completion rate was 62% (21 out of 34). Although only 37% of the students were women, the completion rate for women (75%) was much higher than that for men (59%). Eighty percent of African students and 75% of white students completed the course compared to 55% of coloured students.

5.1.1 Reasons for not completing the course

Five out of nine coloured men did not complete the course. Many of these were people in management positions with heavy workloads, both in the Department of Education and in NGOs. One of the white women dropped out during the first year because she could not cope with the language of learning. She is adamant that if the material had been in Afrikaans, she would have continued. She still keeps the first manual for reference. Except for two students, all those who did not complete dropped out in the first year – these seem to have been mainly students who had no prior teaching experience. All 22 students who remained in the second year eventually graduated.

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5.1.2 1996–7 results

There is an equal spread of results across gender and for Afrikaans and Xhosa speakers. All the speakers of Setswana achieved second-class passes.

As the database is incomplete, it is not possible to draw any definite correlation between prior education and results except in the case of one student who had a Masters degree and achieved the only first-class pass. Those with Primary Teaching Certificates tend to cluster in the third-class pass range. It seems that of the 14 students who had no teaching experience only three completed the course but all three achieved second-class passes.

5.2 1998–9 cycle

In the 1998–9 cycle the completion rate was 59% (33 out of 56).

During the first year, 17 students either dropped out or did not submit the required work (CACE annual report to SIDA and the Department of Education of the Northern Cape November 1999). Of the 56 students who registered for this cycle, 46 remain on the database.

The highest rate of non-completion was among Tswana-speaking women (50%), and Tswana speakers overall (46%) as compared to speakers of Afrikaans (38%) and IsiXhosa (33%). The work profile of those Tswana students who dropped out and those who completed shows an equal spread of ABET facilitators and teachers working in adult centres after hours as well as 'unknown', so there is no clear explanation for this difference.

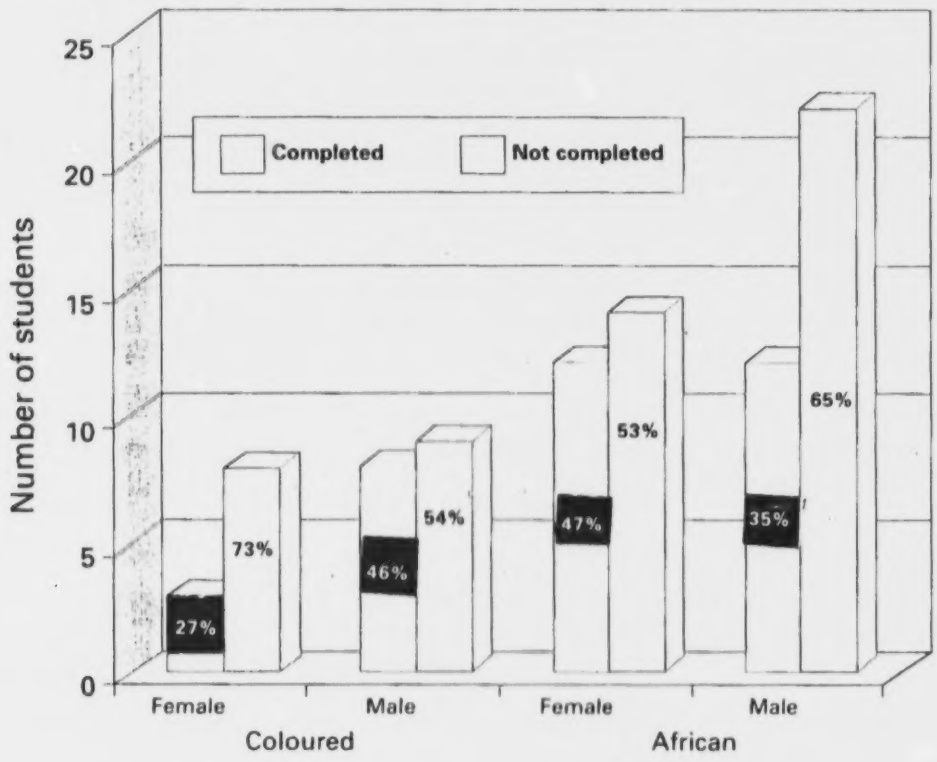

Figure 2.6 1998–9 Completion rate by race and gender[2]

5.2.1 Reasons for not completing the course

Students interviewed from the 1998–9 cycle had various reasons for not completing the course. These are described on the next page.

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Work-related reasons

Too many other responsibilities

Once again many students in senior management positions were simply too busy. Of the students who did not complete the course, one was in a coordinating position in an NGO, one was a school principal and one was a teachers' union official:

> *'It is a question of time, because I am also busy with a teacher union matter and it became extremely difficult for me. What sometimes happened was when the lecturer from Cape Town flew into Kimberley, I would be sitting at the airport to fly out to Cape Town for union meetings. I couldn't handle the CACE course as well as the union work.'*

Missing exams because of work demands

Several students who did not complete the course due to not writing exams have said that they would like to write the exams or complete outstanding assignments in order to get their qualifications. In one case, writing these exams is all that is standing between a former student and his desire to teach ABET to prisoners in a maximum-security facility.

Study weekends

Study weekends lasted three and a half days. Many students were teachers and,

> *'it's very difficult for them ... the principals to give them off ... on a Thursday and a Friday. Many of them came only on a Saturday morning.'*
>
> (ABET Unit official)

Course-related reasons

Academic level

Many of the students with no experience of teaching and only two years' of college study found the course too demanding.

Political slant

According to more than one informant, some students left the course in the second year of the 1998-99 cycle because of a perceived political slant in the materials. The lecturer points out with justification that this would have made more sense in the previous cycle straight after the democratic elections. An examination of the course materials shows that they reflect the development of curriculum and other policies in ABET fairly and accurately. Policy proposals made by other parties prior to the new government's adoption of the new policy for Education and Training are present in the readers.

Administrative problems

During the second year administrative problems were caused by issues outside of CACE's control. These led to assignments not being returned to students in time for them to use the feedback before the next assignment and to different criteria for marking being applied by replacement lecturers brought in to help out. Many students were discouraged by their marks and the difficulty of contacting CACE staff during this period. However, it was only during this period that dissatisfaction was expressed.

Financial reasons

Students who only received 70% bursaries struggled to find the remaining amount and had to stop after the first year. Students and ABET officials found this frustrating as several students with full bursaries dropped out and yet those who were highly motivated and wished to continue could not do so.

Contextual reasons

One-teacher, one-job policy

The implementation of this policy in 1997 made it clear that teachers in day schools could no longer expect to be employed in the adult centres. Some were still employed for the course of 1998 while new educators were being trained, but eventually all these teachers were phased out and for many there was no longer any point to completing the qualification.

Redeployment

Many students had hoped to be able to move into adult education as part of the redeployment process initiated in 1996 as a way of improving the spread of resources in education. However, several of these students proved to be in key posts and would not become eligible for redeployment anyway (Melita Mohlala, Chief Education Specialist, 31/10/00). The Department of Education was aware of the contradiction in the partnership's training teachers who it would never be able to employ but was pressured by changing political and economic imperatives. They believed nevertheless that building adult education capacity would still benefit the province.

5.2.2 1998–9 results

More men than women achieved second-class passes. Otherwise there is no significant difference between results or non-completion rates for either language or gender.

Two of those who had done the Certificate and were then accepted on to the Advanced Diploma found the course very challenging but felt that with the background of the Certificate course they could 'connect more easily with the Advanced Diploma' even though they had had no previous university education. They passed successfully but on the lower end of the scale. It was thus possible for Certificate students to move successfully from the equivalent of M + 1 (now Level 5) to a postgraduate diploma (now Level 7). Of the five others who had done the Certificate course, two have only the final exam outstanding, two withdrew for work reasons and one could not start the second year because she did not have the money.

5.3 Factors influencing success on the course

The wide variety of prior knowledge and experience of students on the course meant that different students struggled with different aspects. Those without any community experience at all struggled, as did those with extensive community experience but little or no exposure to university study. The waiving of the community experience criterion for acceptance on to the course in 1998 meant that many students did not have the experience base on which to build new knowledge and skills. With regard to prior qualifications, those who had only a Junior Primary Teaching Certificate clustered in the 'just pass' or 'just fail' categories and only one of them achieved anything higher than a third class pass. So, while prior academic study is a predictor of success, this does not apply to the Junior Primary Teaching Certificate.

On the sample of questionnaires returned there is no correlation between age and results for either cycle. There is also no correlation between results and previous teaching experience, either in schools or in ABET. Students' first language was also not a significant factor in performance.

Success on the course was influenced by a set of interrelating factors: a strong goal-oriented motivation (either professional or social), at least two years tertiary study, and for those students outside the Department of Education sufficient finances to pay the 30% of the fees not covered by the bursary. Prior community experience was an enabling but not sufficient factor as were management experience and the number of years of tertiary study.

Those who had the greatest success in applying the knowledge and skills learnt on the course had the following: creativity, leadership skills, a commitment to social justice and transformation, and most importantly an enabling or at least changing institutional or organisational context and a clear context of application.

5.4 Comment

In an impact study of the Certificate course in 1995, Angela Schaffer points out that for any course in adult education that is taught after hours and particularly one that uses distance learning, student dropout rate is a preoccupation (Schaffer 1995:17). She quotes Sewart in Distance Education International Perspectives (page 52) as saying that the Open University's figure of 40% dropouts is considered excellent[3]. Sewart points out that

> *'a very significant proportion of the forty percent is in any case unavoidable, ranging from obvious cases of death, through movement, ... significant changes in domestic circumstances and satisfaction with the completion of a part rather than the whole of a programme.'*
>
> (ibid.)

Despite a very different range of factors influencing students' decision to leave the course, the average dropout rate over the two cycles is 40% and can therefore also be considered excellent. Those students who did not complete the course and who returned questionnaires nevertheless indicated that this was the most useful course they had taken and that they apply what they learnt often in their work. Only one person who is unemployed states that she is not applying anything she learnt.

6. STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES OF THE COURSE

The findings presented in this section are taken from an analysis of the questionnaires returned and 18 interviews conducted with a sample of students selected to ensure a spread of urban and rural students and a proportion of students who did not complete the qualification. The percentage of questionnaires returned for the Advanced Diploma was 20%; one-third of these were women. The sample was consistent with the race, language and gender composition of the students on the two cycles of the course but was disappointingly low. This could perhaps be attributed to the fact that very few graduates are working in the ABET field.

> *'When we did the course, we felt like we were going into a course which has got to deal with adult education and that it was only going to be maybe the content and ... the approach for teaching of others. But, we came to realise that it was not a course on what to do everyday, but more a course of the concept. And the concept of approaching the adult education and the concept of being – to put it into practice from a higher level other than of being the actual educator in front of adults and teaching them as an ordinary facilitator would. That is what I found very much interesting.'*
>
> (male student in senior position in other government sector)

> *'I enjoyed the first year more than the second. I know, as you go up, things become more difficult, but the first year was more to do with the job I do and it made me a different person too. You know, the way I used to manage when looking at my first year, I became a very different person, very strong in my management situation. But the second year was more to do with, you know, policies, documents, legal things and, to me, it was more LLB, you know, ... Not that [the first year] was easy, it was also a lot of work, but it was more of go and interview*

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and interact, you know. And that was much more a practical something. And, I think, that is how adult education should be.'

(female student, senior official in ABET Unit)

These two quotes illustrate the values placed on different aspects of the course by students' different needs and learning styles. Many students valued the conceptual and theoretical depth of the course; others found the balance between theory and practice uneven.

6.1 Experience of different modules

Based on the questionnaires, the modules seen as most useful were those indicated in the table below.

Module	Number of responses for most useful module
1. ABET (Adult Basic Education and Training)	4
2. Adult Education and Training – Theory and Practice	4
3. Adult Education and Training in Transition: Transforming Policy, Transforming Society.	6
4. Your Organisation, Your Role	8

Table 2.1 Modules identified as most useful

One person who is currently a schoolteacher and was a CACE tutor mentioned a module provided by another NGO as being the most useful (Prolit for Level 1). Prolit (Project Literacy) is an NGO that was contracted by the Department of Education to offer one week of ABET training to new facilitators.

The fact that the ABET modules are rated less useful than other modules cannot be read as a comment on their value as educational tools: only five of the 18 respondents are currently involved in ABET as facilitators (one in another sector). If larger numbers of graduates had been able to take up positions in ABET, the modules would have come into their own.

The modules that are most popular are those which students have been able to use across contexts and in a wide variety of situations from training in school governance for principals to strategy workshops for community members.

One part of Module 2 in particular is mentioned by nearly every respondent and interviewee and had a powerful effect on people's ways of thinking about education. Students remember in particular the spiral model of design based on popular education principles (Arnold et al. 1995), which they seem to have used in a wide variety of contexts (community police forums, youth training, AIDS workshops).

A student, although working as Provincial Head of Asset Maintenance for the Provincial Commissioner's Office (Correctional Services), has used his knowledge creatively to change the lives of people around him:

'one would think that maybe [my present post] has got nothing to do with education, but now with what I had picked up when I was doing the CACE course because at some point we ... had the module which was dealing with intervention. And then, I think that is the most important module which I really think was the highlight of the course, the one with interventions, because it really changed my point of view with regards to looking at things and looking at each and every

person's work. Whenever I look at an aspect of work, the first thing that comes to my mind is training. I am looking for – I am looking for an educational intervention in everything that I am doing now. Because I have got to do repairs of prisons, I have got to look at different fields of technical aspects, I have got to look at electrical work, I have got to look at plumbing, I have got to look at building and I have got to look at the structures and everything. But, whenever I am looking at that, I am looking at it with the view from the training perspective. If I am doing this, how they empower the people that are doing that, people below me.'

6.1.1 Adult Education and Training in Transition: Transforming Policy, Transforming Society (Module 3)

This module seemed to be the greatest challenge but coincidentally the one which students mentioned most frequently as having 'opened their minds' and given them 'a broader vision'. The student currently studying in the UK who will be part of the new Higher Education Institute in the Northern Cape still finds this module useful.

The students who mention this module were able to use what they learnt to participate more effectively in political structures and to deepen other people's understanding of national economic policies:

'When we started, I was not really sure what was this GEAR, but due to that it helped me because I could participate in other levels of discussions ... By then I was one of the secretaries of the ANC branch so I could [inform] their helpers.'

(male student, rural deputy principal)

'We used to quarrel about money. I am able to convince the teachers why they don't have money because of the IMF, things that I read from CACE. I can tell and explain to a person why we don't have monies because of the things I learnt like monetary fund and the World Bank.'

(female student, rural schoolteacher)

The experience of two of the past students who are now in the ABET Unit was different. They felt that the course was too dense and the language really difficult. They are 'forever formulating policies' in their work but they cannot use what they learnt from this module. Another student in an evaluation seems to echo the feelings of quite a few when she found the level of difficulty disempowering. She also suggested that the course should include an understanding of how policy is developed and how to influence it as an activist, ordinary member of civil society, or ETD practitioner. Many students found the assignment too difficult and the questions too much the same. However, one (a former Certificate student) recounted her sense of pride in succeeding in this assignment after many sleepless nights.

Comment

The lecturer was aware of the problems: she tried hard to acquire skills in writing for distance education and feels that the module could have been taught in a way that 'it related to what [students] did every day in the classroom'. Initially the assumption was that many graduates would move into senior positions in adult education, but when contextual factors made this no longer possible the course could have been reworked.

This module most clearly reflects the tension between developing a generic course that will equip people to perform effectively at senior level in a variety of sectors and contexts and a course that will enable graduates to deal with the day-to-day realities of ABET on the ground.

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6.1.2 Your Organisation, Your Role (Module 4)

The chairperson of a community policing forum used what he learnt from this module to transform the forum from a deeply polarised structure that functioned to achieve political ends, to something that he feels really serves the community:

> *'So you just always said the police are wrong without looking at the other side. Later on, especially now this year when I have been elected as chairperson again, I see that we have to build a relationship and that is what community policing is about, to build a relationship between your community and the police. Where before they saw the police as the enemy, now you have to try and involve them and bring them together.'*
>
> (male student, rural)

An unexpected outcome of this module was a father who decided to take care of his two year old daughter instead of sending her to live with her granny after his wife was redeployed and has to leave very early to travel to work:

> *'I would have been maybe the old fashioned type of father who says that my daughter is and she must go and stay at the granny and then I will stay alone. But now, as I say, I discovered myself as a person who can play many roles. I am working, I am travelling and doing all that, but I am staying with a two-year-old. I can wake up and clean up the house.'*
>
> (male student, senior position, Correctional Services)

6.2 Other issues

6.2.1 Race, class and gender

The course as a whole had an impact on students' understanding and perceptions of others:

> *'I would never have met people from other places (other students) and come into contact with their views on race and racism. That was enriching ... I would never have known that there was even racism within the black community, not just white and black I would never have had that if I'd just stayed in [formal] teaching.'*
>
> (translated from Afrikaans) (male student, rural)

Many students were deeply influenced by exposure to different cultures and opinions and expressed appreciation of this even though the lecturer in charge felt that study weekends did not succeed in breaking down racial barriers. One of the Xhosa-speaking students mentions that they were all one big family by the end of the course and that she was then shocked when moving to a new community to be exposed to racism from Setswana speakers (and began strategising to address this through joint social projects).

A male student mentioned that through the course he came to see that it was important for women to participate and take on leadership positions where as before that was 'not in [his] culture'.

6.2.2 Outcomes-Based Education (OBE)

ABET facilitators in the adult learning centres found the section on OBE useful and still use it.

6.2.3 Learning processes

Students remember most vividly those activities that required role-play or similar kinds of active and participatory learning. Several mention that they became better educators by observing the lecturers.

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6.2.4 Language

This was raised as an issue early in the first cycle – the first language of all facilitators was English while English was a second or third language for all students. After discussion, it was agreed that the medium of instruction and materials would be English but students could write assignments in any of the official languages of South Africa (Advanced Diploma monthly report, March 1996). By the second cycle, however, this agreement seems to have lapsed as two Advanced Diploma students remember a student who wrote an assignment in Setswana and was told 'it was not acceptable' and he had to do it over again (researchers feedback meeting, 28/11/00). The logistics of finding adult educators with the time to mark post-graduate assignments in four languages is probably a factor.

6.2.5 Academic support

In 1996 students took the initiative to form study groups, which CACE then strongly supported. When groups worked well, they were very effective as peer support mechanisms.

> *'Study groups were just as helpful in the sense that when I could not attend the whole of every class then I could always go back to the study group and they helped me, but sometimes you feel you don't want to be a parasite and always just ask others, because you feel that you want to do your best and always be able to do everything but because of time, I couldn't do it.'*
>
> (translated from Afrikaans) (male student, senior education officer, rural)

Apart from this means of peer support, students were encouraged to phone their lecturers at CACE when they had questions or concerns and CACE would phone them back. While students did take advantage of this, some felt intimidated and others found the process time-consuming and difficult, a concern echoed in an Advanced Diploma report from CACE (mid-year evaluation report, 08/06/97). At one stage the Advanced Diploma coordinator began pursuing funding options for tutors for this course ('Motivation for tutor system for Advanced Diploma students', 02/10/97) and she would definitely like this to be part of the course if it is run again.

6.2.6 Resources

Assignments that required research posed difficulties for students because of the lack of materials. CACE did its best to set up small libraries and so make materials available to students, but these libraries were limited and often hundreds of kilometres from rural students.

6.2.7 Administrative support and communication

One student emphasised the high standard of administrative support he received from both Kimberley and Cape Town offices. The only time students complained was during the first half of 1999 when CACE staff were dealing with a series of personal and family crises and could not provide the necessary support to students, or return assignments to them on time.

6.3 Comments about the course

6.3.1 Academic level

Almost all students interviewed said they struggled with the course but most persevered and felt great pride in their achievements. Those who arrived on the course without previous experience in adult education or without really knowing what they were registering for found it 'a blur, I did not really know where I was going ... [it] frustrated a lot especially for my level. It was too high sometimes you see, most of the things are like people talking Greek' (female student, urban, Kimberley region).

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Despite this experience, many appreciated the lecturer's concerns for high standards: 'it was at such a high level, but I'm not sorry for the level of teaching because it took me to greater heights' (female student, urban, Kimberley region).

The CACE Advanced Diploma coordinator was surprised to discover that:

> *'Students who came out of the colleges of education, the historically black colleges of education, were faced with their first experience of writing a traditional academic assignment when they came on to course. They'd never been to university and when they struggled, I asked them what kinds of writing they were expected to do when they were in college and it was mostly tasks they had to do and assignments of a descriptive nature: lesson plans; very little of anything which involved critical analysis and analysis and argument. And so not only did I expect them to do their first traditional assignment in the second year of their studies or the last module, but it was also the first time in their lives ... Had I done this again, I think I would take academic development and academic support a lot more seriously. And it's not that I... I don't think that I had the time to take it seriously before. I just absolutely didn't have the time. I think I may have structured the assignments [for the policy course] differently. I think I would have structured the course slightly differently.'*

6.3.2 Relevance of curriculum

When asked how often they were able to apply what they had learnt from CACE in their work, eight said 'always', five said 'often', two said 'not often' and one said 'never' (this person was unemployed).

Sixty-one percent of respondents said that compared to other courses they had attended, the CACE course was the most useful. Many students have three or four other qualifications so this is a significant response. There was one response for 'about the same' and two for 'less useful'.

6.3.3 Suggestions for improvement

Students made the following suggestions for improving the course:

Curriculum

- ensuring a closer relationship with the Certificate in areas such as culture and small business;
- including small business development as a module on its own; this is seen as an essential life skill and ingredient of economic transformation;
- including a module on local government;
- placing greater emphasis on poverty and unemployment;
- bringing in considerations around skills training in relation to ABET;
- adding Development theory to the course, and also more on education and training theory;
- placing more emphasis on contextualised and practical application of skills; and
- developing computer skills as an essential tool.

Stakeholders' perceptions and suggestions include:

- creating a stronger focus on project management, including business plans, fund-raising, etc. (Department of Education);
- including more on learning programme design and developing learning support materials (Department of Education, Correctional Services); and
- developing research skills to a greater extent (Department of Education).

Neither the Certificate nor the Advanced Diploma 'touched unit standards' which are the core of the new system so the Department had to train facilitators on this. They would also like students to understand ABET policies and plans such as the Multi-Year Implementation (MYI) plan and how to implement them[4].

Many students in interviews mention computer skills as an essential part of the course. They felt they have not had a chance to acquire these skills elsewhere and need them for their own academic development. One student and one tutor suggest that academic support would be much easier if students and lecturers were linked by e-mail.

Resourcing

Students also struggle to find places to meet with their study groups:

> *'We don't have a place where we can come together and then we use schools and schools are very busy. We use halls, community halls, and then they are very busy.'*
>
> (male student, farm school principal)

The fledgling resource centres that were set up in Kimberley, De Aar and Upington were a good beginning and a student suggests that rooms in smaller rural areas could be negotiated with local municipalities and also used to store a computer and small library.

Bursaries

One student from the 1998 cycle felt that:

> *'UWC should sit down with the funders and look at the financial implications as well as the selection of students. They should look carefully at that because I noticed that in the course we did there were many people who were not qualified to do the course and as the course went on, they dropped out. And those people who dropped out, they had bursaries. In other words, those of us who didn't get bursaries, had to pay a lot of money out of our own pockets and we finished the course. UWC should look at the people who successfully completed the course and their standard of work and then give merit bursaries.'*
>
> (translated from Afrikaans) (female student, schoolteacher and trainer)

Students also asked that bursaries be made available again for the MA as many people who did the Advanced Diploma 'would really like to do the MA but the salaries that people earn at the moment are insufficient' (translated from Afrikaans) (female student, schoolteacher and trainer)[5].

ABET Unit staff also felt that the bursary system needed to be more carefully controlled and provision made for recovering the money from students who dropped out in order to use it in some way to help others. They felt students should sign some kind of contract with CACE or the funding partners to improve accountability and the best use of resources.

7. IMPACT OF THE ADVANCED DIPLOMA

7.1 Personal impact

> *'This course was really a big challenge to me, for example, at home it comes between me and my family. I didn't have a chance to relax with them due to a lot of work. In the community, it was also a challenge because to try to transform the thinking of the people was a big task.'*
>
> (female student, Taung Station)

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The following student did both the Certificate and the Advanced Diploma and although she did not complete the Diploma she still says that she uses everything she learnt on the course.

> *'CACE courses have changed my life a lot because for the first time in my life the [Douglas Combined] School chooses my child to fly to Scotland as the best student with good manners, etc. for the first time in my life being elected as a councillor ... (but still waiting for the results); for the first time I was chosen by the school to come and join the mainstream teachers short-listing and have also done the interview to them. I have a lot to say here but I do not have enough space.'*
>
> (female student, ABET facilitator, rural)

These two students illustrate the huge demands that the course placed on students, both intellectually and in terms of time away from their families, but also the many changes that became possible because of it. For all but one student the effort was worth it and all express pride in their achievements.

7.1.1 Identity and self-image

The most common response in interviews to the question: 'How did the CACE course affect your life?' was 'It gave me a broader vision', or 'It opened my mind'. Other responses included 'confident now more than ever', and 'knowledgeable with more understanding', and a woman who describes how being required to speak during her studies taught her to be creative and speak for herself so that now she can speak in front of the whole community. Two people mentioned 'very, very good people skills'.

7.1.2 Impact on academic goals and plans

One of the students who had never experienced university education before felt that it 'made me ready for every programme ... really I'm doing now B.Ed. with the University of the Western Cape, I'm doing very well and only because of that advanced diploma. It did a lot. Therefore I appreciate it very much' (male student, farm school principal).

All students who returned the questionnaire were interested in further study in a wide range of areas and five of them expressed interest in the MA (see Appendix 8). Two past students and members of the Department of Education are studying for Masters degrees in the UK (one did not complete the Advanced Diploma).

Exposure to academic skills and rigorous standards was also appreciated:

> *'The way they facilitated us and their comments about our work, I would say that empowered me and it put back – it brought back some interest within myself. As a result, as I'm still furthering my studies, most of the time, even if I have some work to do, I always refer back to the way I used to study during the time I was doing the Advanced Diploma.'*
>
> (female student, schoolteacher)

They all took seriously the lecturer's insistence on high standards. Three informants state they would still recommend the course even though they have not been able to use the qualification or received any financial benefits from their efforts.

7.1.3 Self-understanding and reflexivity

> *'My life has changed in many respects, many challenges that have stared me in the eyes, and I can sort things out for myself if it looks difficult. I can also handle conflict. I come into contact with a lot of conflict but I don't see it as a problem because I am often critical and help people*

to understand that taking it personally is not the best solution. We go forward with issues and not personal interests.'

(translated from Afrikaans) (female student, Certificate and Advanced Diploma, rural)

This student gives an example of how standing for municipal elections against a school principal, who was also a good friend, led to conflict with the principal and his family, which she nevertheless managed to weather through applying what she had learnt from CACE. She is now ward councillor.

Other students talk of the course helping them to understand themselves better, to recognise their strengths and weaknesses, to stay calm under pressure (two students), and how their families have benefited and learnt from them.

One female student, an ex-ABET facilitator, talks about her work as a security officer and police reservist:

'If you are very observant, you see people do things in your presence and you know you have to stand up for what is right and you have to speak out for human rights when people are still oppressed and you can meet great negativity ... But I have a strong backbone ... because I conditioned myself in the way that CACE taught me and I made up my mind that I will apply what I learnt on the course whenever I can.'

(translated from Afrikaans) (certificate and Advanced Diploma, rural)

7.1.4 Gender role perceptions

Two male students have transformed their thinking on gender roles, one in particular taking on his daughter's care:

'I have got this baby here. I see my role as a father as a much more different role and it has got to be a role which must stand out ... I look at it as another role which is required of me in order to effect certain – to effect progress within the family concept.'

(male student, senior official in other government sector)

7.1.6 Critical consciousness

Changes mentioned include increased human and contextual understanding:

'Ag, for example, communication skills and involvement, you learn that your community must be able to develop itself ('moet kan op werk'). I learnt that strongly from CACE that you should get more involved with the school children by going out and visiting them at home. The child is not performing well and [teachers] pressure the child but I know that what is going on at home is not very nice so you must go and see what is happening at the child's home before you place demands on the child at school.'

(translated from Afrikaans) (male student, rural school principal)

Critical thinking is also frequently mentioned:

'What I have now learnt from these CACE studies is that not to believe each and every thing you learn. To what you are learning now, you must try to find out something which is hiding ... Try to analyse each and everything we are reading. That is the skill that I have really gained from them.

(male student, schoolteacher)

7.1.6 Comment

To summarise, the greatest impacts on a personal level are:

- a deeper understanding of the importance of tolerance and human dignity;
- the confidence to challenge unjust practices and to promote new ways of interacting (family, organisational, institutional);
- increased assertiveness (in learning group, family, organisation, place of work, community) - this is especially mentioned by women; and
- improved academic skills and many students engaged in or interested in further learning.

While the first three impacts above are not mentioned by all, or even the majority of interviewees, the fact that those who do mention these changes attribute them unhesitatingly to the course is important.

7.2 Impact on career/work

7.2.1 Change in job level or economic status[6]

Of the questionnaires returned, 64% of respondents were in the formal schooling sector. Only six respondents were involved in ABET, two in other government sectors, one as a volunteer and one in a NGO. Two were employed as facilitators in public adult learning centres (PALCs). This is consistent with the effect of the one-teacher, one-job policy discussed earlier (under section 5.2.1) which meant that those who are teaching in day schools can no longer hold ABET posts as well. This policy was gradually phased in from 1997 to 1999.

Total figures for employment of Advanced Diploma students in PALCs from 1996–2000 are:

1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
20	no figures available	24	14	4

Table 2.2 Advanced Diploma students in public adult learning centres[7]

As a result of the one-teacher, one-job policy and other policy and legislative constraints, the shifts that might have been expected in work patterns have not materialised. The 1996 respondents are all in stable full-time jobs; the four men report an increase in income since completing the course but this is the result of promotion rather than of completing the Advanced Diploma. The woman respondent reports no change in her income as there was 'no change in category' after she received her qualification. The man who did not complete the qualification still reports an increase in income.

In the second cycle six people (or 43%) of the sample are teaching ABET:

- two in public adult learning centres;
- two in other sectors (Correctional Services and Posts and Telecommunications at high salaries);
- one in another province combining ABET with full-time teaching (not allowed in Northern Cape); and
- one a full-time teacher who is teaching ABET voluntarily at night.

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Except for the two in PALCs, all the above respondents are men in the higher levels of ABET, one at Level 5 (Further Education and Training). The two respondents in PALCs are women who are teaching at all levels of ABET but with part-time, temporary status and low salaries.

Six respondents (43% of the sample) reported an increase in income; however, this includes the two women who moved from extremely low NGO salaries to slightly higher Department of Education facilitator salaries. Two of the other increases are related to promotion within ABET but in other government sectors. Two people became unemployed after adult learning centres were closed.

Several interviewees stress that doing the course currently brings no economic benefit, only personal:

> *'If you want to empower yourself you get a lot from CACE. I will advise that person if you are not talking about in terms of money, otherwise in terms of development it is okay. Everything you get from CACE and if you want to use that it will help you a lot.'*
>
> (female student, schoolteacher,rural)

Comment

At the moment, completing the qualification only occasionally has an effect on career opportunities or income. Of the two ABET facilitators now employed by the Department of Education, one did not complete the course.

There is no correlation between completing the course and the kind of job students currently hold, or between results obtained on the course and the level, seniority or nature of work currently done. Those with good results do not fare better in the job market. This can be attributed to an economic context where jobs are scarce and where the adult education field is limited. In addition, students are scattered in small communities with specific language profiles where the person who is at hand will get the job regardless of results. Many with top marks remain in administrative jobs as there are no other opportunities in the area and/or limited absorption into senior levels.

On very rare occasions the qualification has led to an increase in income: one student was employed by the Department of Education as a Cluster Programme Manager, then, when his contract was not renewed, he got a highly paid ABET position with the Department of Posts and Telecommunications.

Women with Advanced Diploma qualifications show less increase in income than men, but this is related to promotion within the formal schooling side of the Department of Education. Nevertheless no woman respondent is a head of department or principal. In the interview sample, the only woman in a leadership position was within the ABET Unit. (This does not include leadership in community structures which is discussed in section 7.3 later.)

Despite the one-teacher, one-job policy, many graduates considered moving into the ABET sector, but are put off by the risk of temporary contracts as Cluster Programme Managers (male student, deputy principal, rural). Cluster Programme Managers are responsible for managing and monitoring a number of adult learning centres. In this way, a lot of expertise and experience remains untapped. The experience of these students could be particularly useful in providing pedagogical support to facilitators in centres.

7.2.2 Recognition and status at work

Once again there are mixed feelings about the impact of the Diploma on recognition and status.

> *'It really boosted my confidence. At a certain point you know, when you finish up at college as a teacher, you come then – when you come into the broader society you find that there are nurses, doctors, psychologists and I am just an ordinary teacher. Like the doormat of society. If the children do very bad, then they think no it is the teachers, they are very poor. But, ever*

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since doing this course, I feel that I am part of the broader spectrum of the high society kind of professionals because I just became aware of certain things that I wasn't aware of ... all of a sudden, I realised how much I am worth.'

(male student, other government sector, urban)

While many express the same kind of boost to their personal sense of worth and professional identity, they are disappointed by the lack of financial and professional recognition by the Department of Education. ABET Unit officials point out that they took the step of recognising and paying for both CACE courses ahead of the national processes. However, they also feel that Advanced Diploma students who are not working in ABET cannot expect to get paid for a qualification which is not of direct relevance to their job. This means that recognition will be in principle only for most students. Secondly, budget constraints mean that even those Advanced Diploma students who do work in ABET cannot get paid at their appropriate notch but must accept a lower rate.

Nevertheless, students feel that they would appreciate some form of recognition from the Department of Education, even if no financial increase may be possible:

'I'd like to ask that the department gives some kind of recognition to the people who completed their CACE course because it wasn't easy to do that course and at the end of the day all a person asks is recognition, even if it is not financial.'

(translated from Afrikaans) (female student, schoolteacher and trainer)

7.2.3 Work practices

Students working in all sectors can identify ways in which the course helped improve their competence and confidence:

ABET Unit

It is not possible to trace impact directly as the students started the course with a range of other academic experience, knowledge and skills. However, the two senior members of staff in the ABET Unit feel that the students working in the ABET Unit became better managers and the Chief Education Specialist confirms this; she feels that they perform extremely well (stakeholders' symposium, 13/02/01). Their increased efficiency has no doubt had an effect on the Unit's ability to expand rapidly (from 19 adult learning centres in 1995, to 95 centres currently), thereby increasing access to ABET and responsiveness to needs on the ground. It has also led to a steady improvement in systems and procedures, ensuring that educators get paid regularly and on time, and so improving motivation and morale, as well as improving accountability through effective monitoring and record-keeping. The consistent improvement in the standard and detail of statistics within the Department of Education is evidence of better planning and use of resources. It is clear that this Unit works extremely hard and is highly committed to achieving its goals, despite static budgets and increasing demands.

Public adult learning centres (PALCs)

While at the start of the partnership it was thought that Advanced Diploma students would act 'as programme managers or centre managers and so on' (Moira Marais-Martin, ABET Unit employee in 1996), only one has acted in this position and then for a short time before moving into another government department. Pay levels and long-term security seem to be the main reasons for this.

One student working on a voluntary basis in a public adult learning centre (PALC) feels that the course was not relevant for practitioners working with 'people on the ground' (male student, urban). The other two Advanced Diploma students teaching in PALCs feel that the Diploma equipped them to understand and perform their role better and to teach in a way that meets their learners' needs more effectively. Both these students had done the Certificate as well. One found the ABET module

the most useful, the other says she uses everything from both courses. Together these two facilitators reached 260 learners at all levels of the ABET system at the beginning of the year. The number had dropped to 110 by the end of the year. One facilitator seems to link her literacy work to real needs such as running community meetings and writing minutes, etc. Her learners have gone on to become involved in community projects, local government, school governing bodies, etc.

Both students teaching in PALCs are highly committed to ABET and are effective facilitators. The overall pass rate for Levels 1–3 in the centre at which they teach was 90% (Setswana and Afrikaans mother-tongue) which is much higher than the provincial average of what seems to be about 55% (results provided by the ABET Unit, Kimberley, 2000). However, the statistics are hard to interpret in their current form. Throughput and repetition rates are not available. Only 64% of learners wrote the exams out of those on the lists and the lists do not show the number of learners who dropped out during the year. For these reasons, overall effectiveness is hard to assess.

Both students are hoping to study further and eventually to move out of ABET. This is not because they do not wish to continue in the field but because they see no future for themselves. The constant insecurity of the contract system and the low pay make them feel that they will have nothing to count on, as they grow older.

To summarise, impacts on work practices can be seen in the large numbers of learners reached, the pass rate, the kinds of skills developed and the consequent changes in the lives of learners and their involvement in income-generating activities and community structures. While this is a small sample, it shows what can be achieved by skilled facilitators with a strong grounding in ABET.

Higher Education Institute (HEI)

The Advanced Diploma has helped to equip the two past students who will form part of the staff of the new Higher Education Institute. In response to the question 'How did the CACE course affect your life?' one of the students noted:

> *'It improved my facilitation skills; workshop design; organisational skills … [my] understanding of globalisation, neo-liberalism, and structural adjustment policies and how it affects my life, as well as ABET policies, practice, the NQF and the value of Human Resource Development.'*
>
> (male student, urban)

This covers the entire spectrum of the course, and most of the skills needed for educational leadership at this level. While the long-term worth of the course in this context remains to be seen, it has strengthened the potential for successful devolution of the CACE courses to the HEI.

Schools and teacher training

Despite the fact that most students are no longer involved in ABET, those in schools have still been able to use their skills to promote organisational development and improve educational practices in various ways:

> *'It changed my teaching approach, planning of my work, assisted me in whole school development and the … OBE approach [is] now applied in my teaching.'*

> *'It contributed towards making a better lecturer of me (the CACE lecturers were excellent role models).'*

> *'I am able to draw a business plan that is realistic and make proposal for funding in private sectors and governmental departments such as Land Affairs or Social Services, etc.'*

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Where the instructional context has been enabling, some students have been highly effective. One woman was involved in school governance training at all levels from workshops for 70 principals (and so benefiting 70 schools) to training the parent community on farm schools. She showed ability to contextualise training materials appropriately for a range of audiences. The circuit manager who employed her was impressed with her preparation, facilitation and ability to work with adults of all ages and backgrounds (interview with circuit manager, 13/11/00). She received no training for this job other than what she learnt from CACE.

Tutors for the CACE Certificate course

Advanced Diploma students helped ensure the success of the Certificate course by acting as tutors. Sometimes tutors would watch students in action and offer feedback. Tutors saw this role as a two-way benefit: 'my work as a tutor helped me to understand the Diploma module on workshop design and planning.' Another student says that some of the things his Certificate students learnt helped him with his own studies. However, some tutors were not sufficiently well versed in the content of the Certificate to support their students adequately. Others were tutoring in a language in which they were not fluent and students found this difficult.

Researchers for this impact study

Four Advanced Diploma students (one who had dropped out for health reasons) were part of the research team for this impact study. The research benefited immensely from their contextual knowledge and understanding, as well as their people skills and familiarity with ABET.

Correctional Services

Students in Correctional Services describe the impact of various Advanced Diploma modules:

> *'I mentioned it in the first part because we also had to do the module on "organisation". It gave me a chance to do an in depth study of my organisation. You know, I have been working for Correctional Services for the past four years. It was fairly new and I was doing what I was doing, but I never got the chance of sitting down and say – now I am studying the policies. I could read the policies, I could read the Correctional Services Act, but I would just be reading it for fun. Now with your organisation module which you had to do, I had to do an in depth and understand it deeper. I really needed it to pass my examination. I had to understand it. I had to understand it thoroughly. Then in doing that, I got the depth of what the new environment I had just got myself introduced into. And it is there that now I started seeing the loopholes and seeing the gaps which need to be filled and also seeing the strengths and the weaknesses of the organisation. Being promoted to a higher position, now I am sitting at the position whereby I could mention certain things at the provincial management board meeting when we are sitting. I could stand up and say this is not right, this needs to be attended to, but not putting it point blank like that because I have got to strategise it as an intervention and say – can't we look at this, can't we use this in order to achieve this as a goal. But sometimes you throw it to the people and then the people have got to do their inputs. And then in the inputs we say if this is something has got to effect a change on the policy, then the Commissioner takes it up to higher position when he goes to the National Commissioner and the top structure of Correctional Services at their monthly meeting. Then he raises that and then people from work study have got to do researches about that and then the people that are working with the policies have got to look at it and then – it has changed quite a lot of things.'*
>
> (male student)

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The same student talks about the process of demilitarisation of the Department of Correctional Services and the challenge of intervening to make the treatment of prisoners more humane and to promote the shift from punishment to rehabilitation.

> *'I think with the equipment which we have received from CACE on how to do education intervention, one can restructure it and do interventions even in other spheres of the running of the institutions. Then you find that we are so very much well trained in such a manner, that now we do intervention in such a manner which is very much polite, whereby we also achieve our goals. We also affect the policies which is a very good thing again.'*

To summarise, impacts in the context of Correctional Services are:

- the promotion of human dignity and lifelong learning among a population often deprived of both; and
- modelling of democratic relations and conflict management.

NGOs

Two past students (2% of all students on the database) work full-time in NGOs, one in a coordinating position and one in a management position. Both did the Certificate first and neither completed the Advanced Diploma: one because of pressure of work, the other needing only to write the final exam. The student who works for a rural development organisation found that he applied the Certificate course more than the Advanced Diploma but that the latter nevertheless helped with organising and management skills.

Police services

One of the most outstanding justifications for running this course at all is a student now working as a security officer at a bakery in Victoria West. Her life story described below, throws up many of the joys and contradictions of trying to build capacity and a quality system of ABET in a province hampered by a divided and severely under-resourced past. She is one of a few Advanced Diploma students to articulate a coherent and nuanced vision of development. She was certainly the only student in either course to describe an unsolicited and real understanding of a form of ABET provision that goes to the heart of connecting literacy skills with development needs or concerns.

Rachel grew up in a poor family with a father who became very sick when she was in Standard 6 (Grade 8). She left school in the middle of this year and later finished her Standard 10 through ABET classes in Taung in the North-West province. Although she didn't have a Standard 6 certificate, she finished Standard 10 in two years. When she gained her Matric, she was asked to begin teaching adult education and she started teaching English, Afrikaans and Biology for Standard 8 and 10. Her success in this 'woke something' in her and she decided to further her studies. She completed the Certificate in ABET through UNISA. She was also motivated by an education specialist and wished to do a Masters' Degree like him. This spurred her on to get involved with CACE, and CACE allowed her to begin the course even though she did not initially have the money. She was forced to stop after the first year as she could not pay the fees but her greatest desire is to finish the course and go on to a Masters' Degree in ABET, ideally through CACE.

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Rachel talks about the negative effect of the financial debt incurred by students who did not have full bursaries and of the letters of demand that were sent. These students were highly motivated to finish the course and hoped to repay the money by means of getting better jobs and higher salaries. However, even though they wanted to pay, the impact of the erratic payment system for ABET facilitators at that time (since improved) meant that facilitators did not sometimes get their salaries for three months. They then owed so much money that, when they did get paid, they had to plough the money back into their debts and had nothing over to pay for their courses.

As a result of this lack of security, Rachel resigned and is now employed as a security guard at a bakery in Victoria West. She also works voluntarily as a police reservist. This is an enormous loss to the ABET project – but a gain for the police services and the community in which she works. She shows remarkable understanding of the structural causes of crime and compassion towards those who are forced into crime by poverty. She acts wherever possible to ensure that people who are arrested, especially children, are treated humanely and with dignity. She feels that what CACE taught her gave her a psychological and professional advantage over other reservists, that she has learnt to take a stand when things are wrong, and that this has helped her in both her work as a security officer and in the police services.

Students' suggestions to increase the impact on work

Ideas include:

- employing graduates to help improve the quality of teaching in public adult learning centres 'so that they can be in a position to see if the people on the ground, if there is fruitful, effective teaching taking place because many people write boards full at night and those people really don't know what they're doing' (female student, schoolteacher); and
- for CACE to use graduates as "'service deliverers" in the Northern Cape as we know what has happened and we know people's needs' (female student, schoolteacher).

7.2.4 Comment

It appears that in the current economic and educational context the students who have had the most opportunity to apply what they learnt on the course are those in other government departments or in NGOs. The skills that feature most strongly are organisational development and designing learning events. Factors that lead to success are a combination of sound analytical skills combined with a commitment to social change and human rights. Where the institution or organisation itself is under pressure to change, these students' potential for creative intervention is enhanced.

7.3 Impact on students as agents of social change

In 1996, students were involved in the following activities: community policing, church and HIV/AIDS support. In 1998, students listed their involvement as follows: four students assisted with small business; one was involved with skills development with Iscor; one in Health/HIV and one working with youth. Three were in organising positions; one had initiated a successful income-generating project.

Of the seven students who did both the Certificate and at least one year of the Advanced Diploma, one is regional coordinator of AETASA (Adult Educators and Trainers Association of South Africa), three are in NGOs, two are ABET facilitators in the Department of Education and

one is an elected ward councillor. Of these only two completed the Advanced Diploma but all are deeply involved in community initiatives. One woman who did the Certificate prior to the Diploma is an ABET facilitator but also lists involvement in the following projects: land, farming, needlework, Buckland Community Development Trust, Operation Hunger, community civic structures. Two of the women in this group of students were elected as local councillors in the last elections.

Those who are in full-time teaching positions are less involved. A set of exit interviews conducted by Dr Zelda Groener, 1999 coordinator of the Advanced Diploma, show students who had not participated in development or community initiatives before reporting a definite sense of awakening to new possibilities:

> *'I didn't think about social transformation before the course. I am not a person of those things you see. This course was an eye-opener to me. Actually you see as far as social transformation is concerned. It has opened my eyes, made me see that there is a need for me to transform society ... it has made me more dedicated to change things, to make things different ... dedication at ABET centre.'*
>
> (female student, no previous experience)

> *'It helped me in the community as I always use some of this information and education in all meetings I happen to attend, to encourage, to motivate, and to assist with discipline in mind.'*
>
> (female student, schoolteacher, rural)

Just under 36% of Advanced Diploma respondents do not list any form of community involvement except church activities. Reflecting on this during an interview one student remarked:

> *'what we have now received [we must] not just sit with it, we must just do something with it. We will try to involve ourselves more in the community, community activities. Just to put in what we have received.'*
>
> (female student, schoolteacher, rural)

Students use workshop designing skills, facilitation skills and conflict resolution skills in contexts of church youth work and in community structures such as community police forums and block meetings. Students help with fund-raising and teaching financial skills to those elected as treasurers.

One student reports that when she was still teaching ABET she used to link teaching content to development needs. The outcomes she set with learners included 'more participation in the community, self-confidence in every project they happen to be engaged with. Positiveness to achieve whatever they are planning' (rural schoolteacher). She recounts that these outcomes have been achieved and some of her learners are shop stewards and church leaders, 'whereas some started as far as Level 1 but they persevered with determination. I feel so proud of them.'

Another graduate works as a tutor for the Department of Education, but on practical skills, that is, dressmaking. She and her learners have set up a successful project where they make school uniforms and are making a profit. She shows clear initiative and has included those who would not normally be able to participate due to poverty and lack of transport:

> *'We raised funds, to help those who can't afford to pay their fees e.g. some are staying far away, they use transport, we pay for them and we buy some interesting patterns to promote our organisation by fashion and designing skills.'*
>
> (rural tutor)

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In this way she has helped a group of unemployed women generate an income. She also feels that 'the community has transformed its thinking and is now a democratised community.' She hopes to study further for a Masters degree in Adult Education.

Attempts to interview this student for more details failed as she works in a rural area without a telephone and the interviewers' transport money did not come through in time to allow her to make the journey. She is, however, one of the few Advanced Diploma graduates in the sample who are involved in small business development and who work mostly with adults.

Those who were already involved in political structures found many aspects of the course invaluable in explaining global and national developments and impacts to their co-workers. In one case a student used her knowledge from the policy course to help teachers put their unhappiness with the Department of Education over salaries into a global context and to understand South Africa's economic position and related educational budget issues.

One student mentioned that she made copies of the information in the Policy course for people in the community and they 'were a great help'.

7.3.1 Comment

To summarise, some impacts of students as agents of social change are:

- Some women, both CACE students and their learners, have taken up leadership positions in local government and other structures such as school governing bodies.
- Some women learners are now involved in income-generating projects.
- Students have become active in organisational development, predominantly in churches, school governing bodies, and local political structures.
- Students have used their skills to disseminate information and to develop skills for participatory democracy.

Those students who did both the Certificate (CACE or UNISA) and the Advanced Diploma are significantly more active in community projects and structures. A predictor of measurable contributions to social change among this sample would then seem to be: a strong value base and commitment to the needs of the poor and prior involvement in political or NGO structures or prior exposure to a substantive adult education course. Many of those who are full-time teachers do not seem to have found contexts in which they can show their full potential.

8. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The students on the Advanced Diploma in both cycles (1996–7 and 1998–9) vary widely in terms of previous educational qualifications and prior experience. Some have taught either adults or children or both, others come in with experience in practical skills such as plumbing. The difficulty of planning and designing a course for such a diverse group of students is felt at every level of the curriculum: aims and outcomes, selection and sequencing of content, skills or processes, mediation, assessment, and servicing and resourcing (academic support).

The decisions on these issues were complicated by the complex and shifting environment in which the course was delivered. In 1996–7 the new Adult Education and Training Unit in the Northern Cape Department of Education was just starting up. National policies on Adult Basic Education and Training for curriculum and educator standards were not yet finalised, and other sectors were only starting to think about the role that they could or should be playing in adult education. It was not possible to predict with any certainty where opportunities for adult educators would become

available nor to what extent the Northern Cape economy would be able to absorb high-level adult educators.

By 1998 ABET policies were increasingly clarified but job opportunities for Advanced Diploma graduates were shrinking – national pressures to employ retrenched teachers in 1997 were followed by pressure from the Premier of the Northern Cape to employ matriculants or unemployed graduates. As the Advanced Diploma assumed an experience base, if not of education then at least of community involvement, the influx of students with no previous experience at all posed considerable challenges.

Given these difficult circumstances, the Advanced Diploma has succeeded in contributing to transformation by developing high-level skills in previously disadvantaged and under-resourced communities. Over the two cycles, 53% of students were from rural communities, although predominantly from the Kimberley region, and 42% were women. That so few graduates are employed by the Department of Education is a result of factors beyond CACE's control such as the one-teacher, one-job policy introduced in 1997.

For a more detailed discussion of the policy and legislative context see Chapter 6, section 2.6.1.

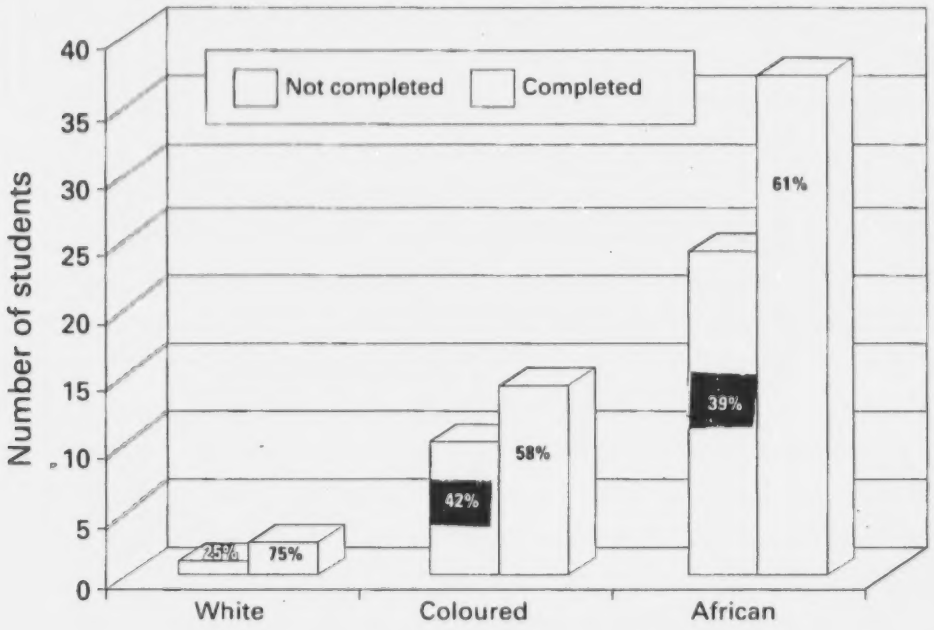

Figure 2.7 Overall completion rate by race

To what extent have programmes facilitated by CACE fitted the needs of participants and their communities in terms of personal careers and ETDPs? (research question 1)

The table on page 52 illustrates the key ETDP roles for which Advanced Diploma graduates are prepared. Those marked with an * overlap with unit standards for ABET practitioners at Level 6 (just below the Advanced Diploma and the highest level for which ABET Unit standards exist).

The information in the table is based on self-reports in the interviews, which covered 32% of all students. It includes evidence from superiors or co-workers or documentary evidence such as workshop plans and training material. Interviews were designed to ensure coverage of all regions: twelve students from the Kimberley region, nine from De Aar, one from Springbok and seven from Upington.

Sector	OD	Manage AET projects *	Strategist	Complete a research assign-ment *	Design & implement learning programme *	Facilitator of learning	Evaluate & assure quality of learning programme *	Develop & evaluate ETD & ABET policy within orgs (Elective) *	Initiate & manage social change
ABET unit	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓		✓	✓
Higher Education Institute (in process)	not yet		✓✓✓					✓✓✓	
Public adult learning centres					✓✓	✓✓			✓
Formal school	✓✓✓					✓			
Correctional Services	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓		✓			✓✓	✓
Posts and Telecom-munications		✓				✓✓✓			
NGOs	✓				✓✓	✓✓✓			✓
Small Business	✓	✓							
Voluntary community involvement	✓✓✓				✓✓✓	✓✓			✓

OD = organisational development
✓ = slight impact ✓✓ = moderate impact ✓✓✓ = substantial impact

Table 2.3 Impact of Advanced Diploma in relation to ABET roles

From this table it can be seen that the greatest success of the course lies in its impact on organisational development – students have managed to apply these skills in a range of sectors and initiatives. Other strong areas include the design and implementation of learning programmes and facilitation skills. For those who are either in the higher levels of the ABET Unit or preparing to move into the Higher Education Institute (HEI) or in management or training positions in other sectors, the course has largely achieved its aims of building strategic capacity. In this case the generic nature of the qualification enabled graduates to apply what they learnt flexibly in context. However, these students only form 8% of the total number on the database.

For the majority who were caught in the middle of shifting policies about who could be employed in adult learning centres, the course has had very little impact. This cannot be laid at the feet of the course itself – the potential of the whole first year covering the ABET system, learning theories, curriculum design and evaluation, etc. is almost untapped. As the number of students working in public adult learning centres is so small, it is hard to draw conclusions about the extent to which it

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fitted the needs of this sector. One respondent feels the course was not at all relevant. Two others found the course 'the most useful' they have done and say they are always able to use what they learnt in their work. One of these facilitators seems to be particularly successful in linking ABET to real development needs.

Most students describe ways in which the Advanced Diploma has changed their practices but overall, there has been little impact on students' careers.

To what extent has curriculum material been of use to participants in their work or communities? (research question 2)

> *'I have to admit that more often than not I still have to reach for the files and modules of UWC. When I'm uncertain about something I just need to take out my projects and things which I have done for UWC, just to put me on track again.'*
>
> (female student involved in training with many different groups of people, Kimberley)

Students did not identify any module as not useful to them. Once again the degree of long-term usefulness is constrained by the fact that most students are not involved in ABET and many are not involved in any form of adult education.

In formal schools, 12 students mentioned that they still draw on the manual for designing and running a workshop. This module on designing learning events is also the most frequently used by students working in various development initiatives, for example, in churches for youth training or in AIDS workshops.

To what extent have CACE alumni contributed to public adult learning centres? (research question 3)

Those students in senior positions in the ABET Unit are contributing to public adult learning centres (PALCs) by continually striving to improve the systems for payment and the efficiency with which materials and other learning resources are dispatched to centres. There is clearly an 'increase of cadres involved in ABET management' (Project logical frame indicator in ODA Project memorandum, 1996). Sustainable capacity for improved ABET delivery is evident both in interviews and the host of Annual Reports, strategic planning and monitoring documents, as well as in the improved functioning of adult learning centres. Indicators of impact are: improved systems, increased efficiency and accountability, increased access by learners, increased responsiveness to local needs, better planning and use of resources.

However, all those trained with the aim of including ABET into their work as lecturers or as part of the core training team are no longer in the ABET field. Apart from one person, the pool of ABET trainers developed is unused. There is little involvement in improving the quality of educational processes in adult learning centres.

Indicators of the impact of the two students working as paid facilitators are:

- 110 learners spread over all levels of the ABET system completed the year.
- Changes in the roles of learners in the community and in leadership patterns were evident.
- Learners took leadership roles in community meetings.
- Learners became involved in school governing bodies, income-generating projects and local government.

There are also several committed students involved on a voluntary basis, one teaching and others advising and offering support. While the numbers are small, they show the potential for ABET in the hands of skilled and committed facilitators.

How successfully has development been linked in the work of alumni? (research question 4)
Of the sample, just under 36% are not involved in any development projects at all, except church activities. One reason for this may be that 62% (18) of respondents were schoolteachers or principals, seven of whom were teaching ABET at night when they registered for the course. Their motivation was related to improving their practice but also to advancing their careers in ABET as retrenchments were taking place in the formal schooling sector. Many students therefore had work-oriented rather than community-oriented goals for doing the course.

In addition, interviews in smaller towns seem to indicate that some students did not make a link between the goals of the course and a need to become active in development. While an agenda of social change underpins the course, this is not evenly reflected in all modules. In addition, many Advanced Diploma students have a middle-class background and do not necessarily identify with the needs of the poor (male student, rural). Two students mentioned the need to prioritise poverty and unemployment in conceptualising the content; another the need to include development theory.

Students who are actively involved in development projects identify the following areas of impact:

- passing on information and skills to their communities and organisations and encouraging them to participate in development projects (democratic access to information and resources);
- building support for projects and organisations;
- using a critical awareness of power relations to strategise for change; and
- assisting people or groups in their communities to interact with local government and to get funding for projects.

Those students who work in NGOs or voluntarily in the development sector report a major impact on their organising abilities, and their ability to understand people and to handle conflict. This applies particularly to those who are involved in a large number of projects (seven students) and those who are standing for public office (two students). Both of the latter students are women who completed the Certificate and the Advanced Diploma (one of them only the first year) – the combination seems to have particularly powerful impact on students' abilities to act as agents of social change. It is striking that there is no correlation between completing the course and involvement in community development initiatives – some of those who dropped out of the course are among the most active and successful.

Were the ideas and intentions appropriate for the environment – both social and educational – of students on the course? (research question 5)

Educational impact
'The Advanced Diploma's syllabus is very closely tied to the nation as a whole' (translated from Afrikaans) (male student, rural). This is one student's perception of the appropriateness of the ideas and intentions of the course. He was one of those who appreciated the generic nature of the qualification while others would have liked it more closely tied to ABET, and to classroom practice, in particular.

The impossibility of meeting all needs in such a course is evident. A CACE staff member feels that the only way to deal with this in a context of few available jobs is to structure the course to offer specialisations. However, there are three main points that emerge in relation to the educational impact of the course:

Initially the assumption by the Department of Education was that the Advanced Diploma would equip students to teach the Certificate. In this case, ABET Unit staff and CACE tutors would have liked to see a closer relationship between the two courses. Areas mentioned include more on research, small business and learning programme design. Including a section on ABET and development would also increase potential overlap and strengthen the ability of Advanced Diploma graduates to impact on development more broadly than in schools and churches.

It is hard to establish the appropriateness of the course's aims and intentions for the majority of students who are not employed in ABET or adult education more broadly. Most of these students are teachers in day schools with little involvement in community initiatives apart from the church. Some of these students, when asked about the impact of the course on their lives, said: 'I was empowered'. But they were unable to provide a specific example of how they experienced this empowerment. It is clear that the course did have considerable success in building students' confidence in their own abilities and in providing them with background knowledge within which to interpret developments in education. Many express frustration with not being able to move into the ABET field, one person describing herself as 'thirsting to deliver adult education'. It is clear that there is a substantial untapped pool of skills which holds significant potential value for the ABET project if ways can be found to draw on these skills.

The enthusiasm with which students responded to the opportunity offered by the Advanced Diploma and the high proportion of respondents (90%) who indicated an interest in studying further indicate a substantial impact on the project of lifelong learning.

In other sectors such as Correctional Services and Posts and Telecommunications, the Diploma has increased the capacity of those in senior management or training positions to manage their work more effectively and with greater clarity of purpose as well as to plan training interventions for others.

Social impact

Indicators of impact mentioned by students include the following:

- Six students interviewed recorded greater self-confidence and ability to act: there was no gender difference in responses on personal impact – three men and three women mentioned increased confidence, and three women and one man mentioned personal difficulties interfering with studies.
- Two students talked of coming to see human dignity and understanding as fundamental to work in any context and have shown evidence of willingness to stand up for human rights: these were students in Correctional Services and in the security industry and Police Services (reservists).
- Two students showed enhanced consciousness and ability to address issues of race, gender and class.
- There was an increase in the number of students, and women in particular, who took up leadership positions in church (six), in school governing bodies (four), and in local government (two).
- Many students recorded an impact on organisational development and an improvement in democratic governance of (day) schools: the Diploma has helped many past students to plan better learning events, projects and programmes for a variety of needs (school strategy workshops, school governing bodies, training workshops, etc.) and to involve parents with little or no education in the school governing bodies in constructive ways, and as a result governance and finance structures are strengthened.

- Many students showed an improvement in the use of communication and conflict resolution skills to help organisations run more efficiently and transparently:

> *'As the church secretary there were problems, I also learnt there [at CACE] how you can do things and get things done in meetings by means of a good agenda and communication skills. For example, at the Catholic Church – I managed to solve a problem of missing money for choir development in a situation where no one would talk about it. By discussing the problem, they managed to work out the reason for the shortfall.'*
>
> (male student, rural)

Socio-economic impact

While those in government sectors experienced some economic benefit from doing the course, the majority of students have not. There was only one woman in the sample out of six people who recorded an increase in income. Economic patterns for this group of students are stable, most staying in either temporary or permanent positions and an equal number moving from unemployment into jobs and from jobs into unemployment. This is a reflection of a static job market and little growth in the adult education sector. See Appendix 9 for a table of the current employment of Advanced Diploma students (interview sample).

Advanced Diploma students on the whole have not significantly impacted on the economic situation of others either: only four students mention involvement in small business and one is involved in skills development through ISCOR. Of these small businesses we could only establish that two were successful, both involving women in sewing projects. In at least one case, an initiative taken by a group of teachers using organisational skills learnt from CACE benefits only other middle-class teachers.

Socio-political impact

At least two students show great political maturity and the ability to look beyond party political interests in the interests of the community as a whole. One expresses a complex understanding of what is needed to counteract poverty in her town: the need for large-scale economic initiatives such as factories to stimulate local economic initiatives and the imperative of collective action to achieve a coherent plan. This understanding of development seems to be her own rather than knowledge gained from the course but she attributes her psychological understanding of those she works with and her professional approach to her CACE course.

Those who were already involved in political structures found many aspects of the course invaluable. Many said they could now explain global and national developments and their impacts to their peers.

Other indicators of political impact on some students are:

- greater understanding of strategic intervention in those serving on community policing forums or other structures that are trying to bring together formerly separate sectors of the community, such as different farming unions; and
- greater democratisation of community structures.

What were the differences in impact between the 1997 and 1999 deliveries of the programme? (research question 6)

There is no significant difference in impact between the two cycles: there are equal numbers from both cycles employed in the ABET Unit and, prior to the one-teacher, one-job policy, as facilitators. There is no difference in community involvement.

What is the relationship between the CACE training and the AET Division's INSET training, and how could these two processes be more mutually supportive? (research question 7)
There is no relationship between the two training processes at Advanced Diploma level. The ABET Unit would have preferred the curriculum to go into more depth on learning programmes and unit standards; this would have assisted those students who were involved in the core provincial training team or are currently in the higher levels of the unit and the Higher Education Institute.

What training is still needed? (research question 8)
Some students need computer training. Other issues are addressed in the next section.

What have been the unintended consequences of the courses? (research question 9)
There are none that emerged.

What benefits have alumni brought to the ABET project and its learners? (research question 10)
The overall impact of past students on the ABET project is discussed in Chapter 7.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

The current economic environment justifies the broad vision for adult education embraced by the Advanced Diploma – many of those who have made most significant use of what they learnt are located outside the ABET Unit. However, for a range of contextual and personal reasons as discussed earlier in this section, the course has not fulfilled its potential as a catalyst for community development.

Some would argue that a course with a strong focus on equipping students to contribute to reconstruction and development, especially in a province where the economy is predominantly rural and there is little hope of large-scale absorption into the formal economy, should have a module focusing specifically on ABET and development. This would provide a closer link with the Certificate and also enable students to explore development debates, to learn from global experiences, and equip them to find creative ways of using ABET as a tool to strengthen development processes. Understanding the mechanisms for this, systemic, logistical, and curricular is one of the least developed areas of thinking in the country and the Northern Cape could once again use its potential for innovation to try out ideas.

The new vision of the ABET Unit as expressed in the proposal for a multi-purpose community centre (Baatjes 2000) would require employees with just such a vision, as well as particular kinds of knowledge and skills needed for creative interventions, based on careful research and analysis using tools such as Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) and sustainable livelihoods approaches (Scott-Goldman 2001). Understanding how to contextualise learning appropriately for different sectors and learning needs would be essential. The groundwork for this is laid in the ABET module of the Advanced Diploma but could be extended considerably and the emphasis shifted towards approaches that are consistent with a more participatory, people-centred vision.

Similarly, some investigation of the 'T' (the Training component of ABET) as part of the development agenda and how it could be incorporated in different Northern Cape contexts would be a useful addition.

It would also seem important to address the continuing separation between education and development in the way in which Unit Standards have been developed for ETD practitioners nationally. This is of particular importance in the Northern Cape context. One way to do this is to develop an integrated set of standards for this course that will create visionaries, planners and

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implementers who can see development and adult education opportunities, seize them and act on them. The implementation of the long-term vision for ABET in the Northern Cape as embodied in the concept of a multi-purpose community centre could be significantly enhanced by strategists in management positions who combine deep understandings of both education and development.

Other possibilities for releasing more of the course's potential are:

- Ensuring that all modules point the way to contextualised application of skills through a balance of theoretical and applied competence.
- Revisiting the relationship between the Advanced Diploma and the Certificate course in order to develop and extend students' skills in key areas such as research and development and to equip Advanced Diploma students to act as mentors and tutors and, in some cases, lecturers to Certificate students. Some of the issues raised by informants in this regard may be addressed by the introduction of the new Diploma course between these two courses but the cyclical development of skills through the three courses needs careful consideration.
- Infusing the ABET modules more strongly with a transformation agenda so that this becomes a criterion for decision-making in setting outcomes, designing a curriculum or selecting a methodology or a set of learning resources.

3 THE CERTIFICATE COURSE

'Ons staan vir niks terug nou meer nie.' [We'll tackle anything now.]

(Certificate student, ABET facilitator and community worker, Upington)

Summary

This chapter describes the experiences of students on the Certificate course and discusses the impact on their personal and professional lives. During the two cycles, 146 students completed the Certificate. Of these, 67% were women and 76% were from rural communities. The course seems to have been exceptional in its ability to transform the beliefs, attitudes and knowledge of a very diverse group of students. See Chapter 4 for a discussion of impacts on the ABET system and Chapter 5 for a discussion of community impacts. Chapter 6 contains two case studies.

Impact-related achievements of the course:

- the development of a successful model of distance education with strong academic support;
- the development of an effective curriculum, which has equipped students to initiate or participate in a wide variety of development projects;
- a strong focus on the development of academic skills, which appears to have formed a sound basis for further learning;
- the effective use of learning processes that reflect the principles of education for social change; and
- a positive impact on patterns of income especially in rural areas.

Impacts recorded by CACE Certificate students:

- a growth in self-confidence, especially for women and older students;
- the development of some strong identities, both as learners and as educators for social change;
- a greater understanding of cultural diversity;
- a growth in critical and creative thinking skills;
- the application of organising, managing and business skills, in a range of contexts; and
- the development of research skills.

Aspects that merit further consideration in the light of this study:

- integrating some components of the curriculum to reduce the load on students in the second year;
- including more on designing learning programmes and unit standards;
- spending more time on the Training Small Business Developers section of the course and extending the financial skills component;
- providing opportunities for practical teaching experience during the course; and
- improving the processes of consultation and communication between the ABET Unit and its facilitators.

1. OVERVIEW OF THE CERTIFICATE

1.1 History

By 1996, when the Certificate was offered for the first time in the Northern Cape, the Centre for Adult and Continuing Education had been delivering the two-year course known as the Certificate for Educators of Adults for eight years. A previous impact study carried out in 1995 stressed the path-finding nature of this course and the self-reflective nature of its development (Schaffer 1995:2). When the course was introduced in the Northern Cape as part of the partnership between the (then) AET division[1] of the Northern Cape Department of Education, CACE and DFID (formerly ODA), curriculum content was carefully evaluated and adapted to make it relevant to the context of Northern Cape students.

This evaluation and reworking continued as CACE staff gained knowledge and experience of the Northern Cape and the needs of students on the course. Attempts were made to involve the Department of Education in curriculum decisions but this was not often possible as the ABET Unit was small and fully occupied with getting the new ABET system up and running. During the second cycle the ***ABET for Development*** component of the course was substantially revised in response to students' needs as well as to the changing economic environment, which seemed to indicate that the majority of students would not find jobs within the formal ABET sector.

1.2 Aims and outcomes[2]

The following extracts from the 1998 course brochure for the Northern Cape give an overview of the aims of the course.

> *'We are living in a time of great challenges in South Africa. Adult educators have an important role to play. All over South Africa, the inheritance of apartheid is still with us in the form of poverty, low levels of education, ignorance about AIDS, racism and gender discrimination, malnutrition, lack of work skills, poor housing conditions and crime. The standard of living for the majority of our population has not improved.'*
>
> *'... Adult educators are important players in this field and are to be found working in organisations involved in ABET, literacy, in political or industrial organisations, trade unions, in state*

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departments such as Correctional Services, in the health sector, in youth development, in non-governmental organisations (NGOs), local government and RDP initiatives to name a few. All over the world, adult educators and trainers have earned a place as makers of change in the community and in the workplace. Many have acted as community developers rather than simply as teachers or trainers of educators and trainers. This means we help you develop skills, knowledge and understanding so that you can be more effective educators, trainers and community developers.

In 1996–97 the course consisted of the following modules:

Year 1

Teaching Methods;

Organising Skills; and

Adult Learning.

Year 2

Research Methods;

Education for Development (including Introduction to Development, The Link between ABET and Development, and Teaching Literacy); and

Contextual Studies.

In the second cycle (1998–9) some changes were made to the curriculum. These changes were responses to students' needs for more knowledge and skills in certain areas such as developing literacy skills, but also to the changes in the economic and ABET environment. The curriculum looked like this:

Year 1

Facilitating Adult Learning;

Organising Skills; and

Contextual Studies.

Year 2

Research Methods;

ABET for Development (which counted for two modules and consisted of):

- Introduction to Development;
- The Link Between ABET and Development;
- Training Small Business Developers; and
- Mother-tongue Literacy.

1.3 Delivery model – organisation and academic support

The Certificate is a two-year part-time mixed-mode course where the distance education component is supported by residential weekend programmes delivered by CACE in Kimberley (five per year) and study group work with a tutor at a learning centre as close to the students' place of residence as possible. Students are also supported through correspondence and telephone with CACE teaching staff. Rurally based students are subsidised in travelling to Kimberley and assisted with accommodation for study weekends.

1.4 Learning processes

The staff members take seriously the need to model effective adult education processes: training sessions are highly participatory and creative and make use of a wide range of activities. As students come from vastly different circumstances, extensive use is made of peer and group learning processes to ensure that everyone participates and that diverse experiences are acknowledged and used as a resource for collective learning. Distance learning materials encourage interaction with the content and promote critical and creative thinking. Materials also integrate the development of academic skills. In both training and learning materials there is a strong emphasis on evaluation and reflection.

1.5 Assessment policy and practices

Students are required to complete three assignments for each module and a final exam. Assignments are worth 50% of the final mark. There is also a 4% attendance mark. All assignments are practical and require the application of knowledge and skills in students' own contexts. The staff travel to students' communities in order to assess them in action.

1.6 Entry requirements and costs

In the first cycle, students with Standard 8 (Junior Certificate, now Grade 10 or General Education and Training Certificate) were accepted on to the course if they had substantial experience in community work or adult education. In the second cycle, a Matric pass (Grade 12) was required in line with the Department of Education's policy to create jobs for matriculants. The 'community experience' requirement became less important for the same reason.

In 1996 the Certificate course cost R1 200 per year and in 1999 it cost R1 500. In the first cycle all students received full bursaries but were required to pay R100 registration fee. In the 1998–9 cycle, students were asked to pay 30% of their fees to increase commitment and accountability. This did not apply to students from the Department of Education or Correctional Services who had 100% bursaries.

2. RECRUITMENT

As described in Chapter 2, initial recruitment for both CACE courses in the Northern Cape was carried out by means of sending information to teacher training colleges and schools where 'night schools' for adults were operating, as well as by visiting rural towns and recruiting students through networks created during the social movements of the 1980s. Most students therefore had strong community links and organisational experience.

For the second cycle, the intake of students was affected by the Department of Education's decision to offer 380 posts in ABET centres to unemployed people. This second intake was younger and had less, if any, organisational experience to draw on. There was also a concerted effort to 'target people in a range of sectors given that in future adult education and training needs to be more squarely integrated within Health, Public Works, etc.' (*Report on the CACE/Northern Cape province partnership for the training of adult educators*, January to June 1997). As a result of this

careful recruitment strategy, students joined the course from Correctional Services (three inmates, three warders) and from the Departments of Health and Social Services. Some came from industry and some from NGOs.

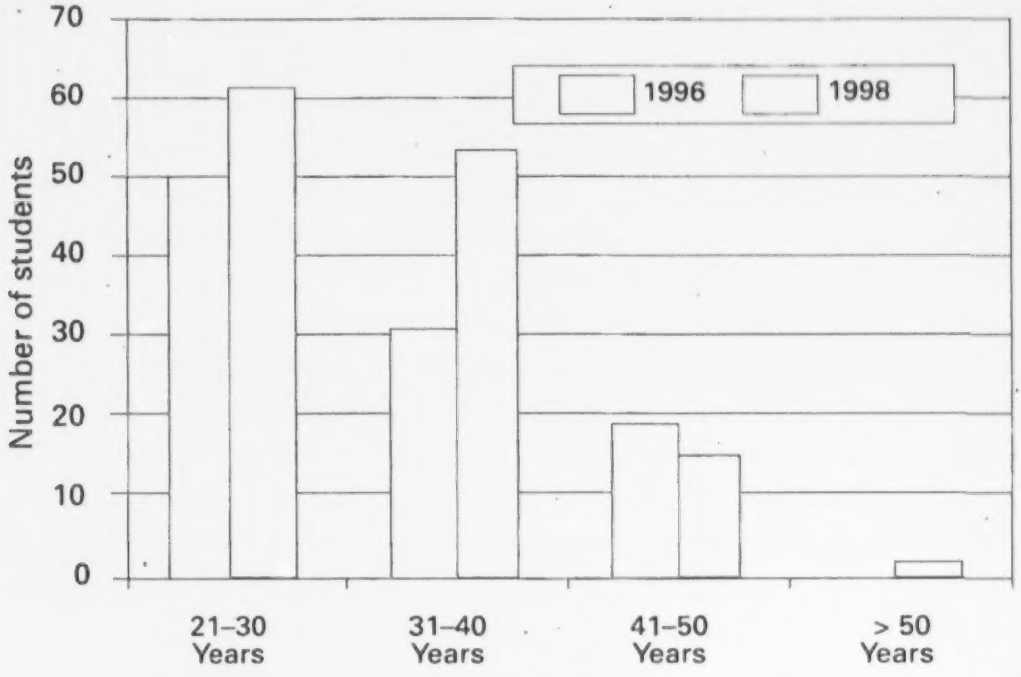

Figure 3.1 Comparison of 1996 and 1998 admissions by age

3. ADMISSION PROFILES: COMPARISON ACROSS TWO CYCLES

3.1 1996–7 cycle

In 1996–7, 77 students were accepted on to the course. The students were very diverse in terms of background, age, language, region, school-leaving levels and organisational affiliation.

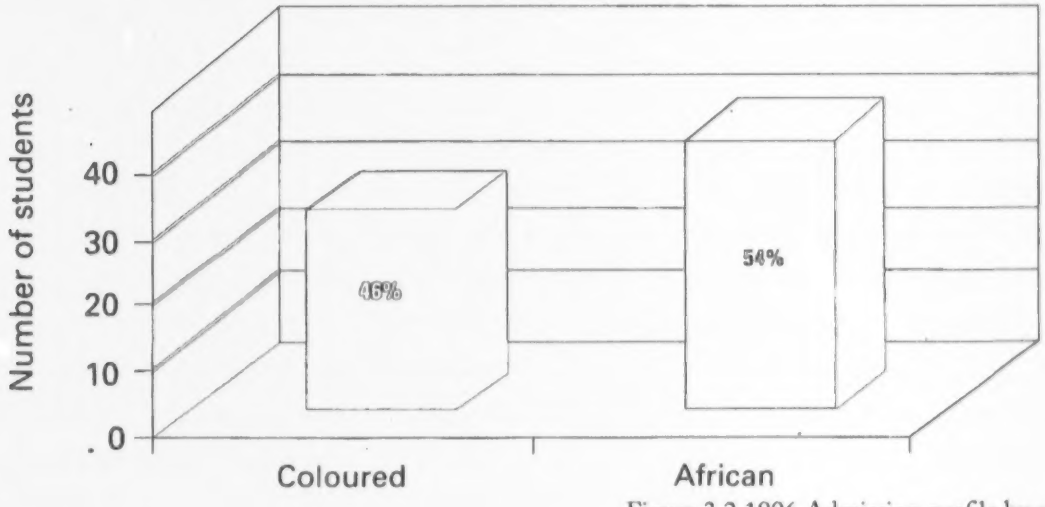

Figure 3.2 1996 Admission profile by race

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3.1.1 Gender

The gender breakdown was 59% female and 41% male. There was an equal distribution of men and women among the African students while men were under-represented in the coloured students. Exact figures are not available.

3.1.2 Language

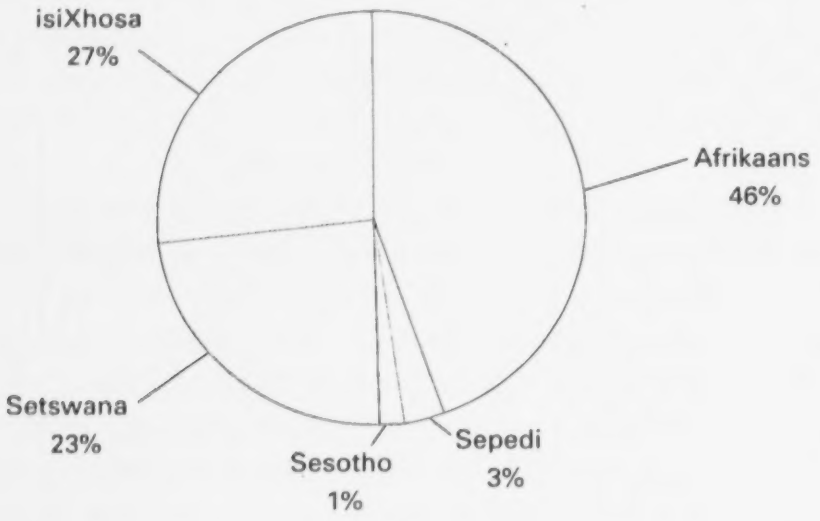

Figure 3.3 1996 Admission profile by language

There were roughly equal numbers of speakers of IsiXhosa and Setswana, with Afrikaans speakers in the majority.

3.1.3 Rural/urban profile

Students clustered around three nodal points:

- 37% from De Aar (Carnarvon, Victoria West, Colesberg, Noupoort and Hanover);
- 25% from Upington (Rietfontein, Pofadder, Postmasburg, Kuruman); and
- 38% from Kimberley (Douglas, Ritchie, Barkly West, Delportshoop, Warrenton, Taung, Pampierstad and Hartswater). (See Map 1.2)

The profile was, therefore, predominantly rural. There were also 14 students in the Springbok region who at that stage attended study weekends in the Western Cape as it was closer. In the second year of the course, they began to attend study weekends in Kimberley. Springbok students are included in all figures.

3.1.4 Age

The women were mostly in their early thirties and the men slightly younger on average, in their late twenties. The average age of the students was 32 years, with the youngest being 21 years and the oldest 58 years. About half the students were in the 21–30 age group, while 31% fell into the 31–40 age group, and the rest into the 41–50 age group.

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3.1.5 Employment sectors

Forty-three percent of students were wage earners in development organisations while the remainder (57%) were unemployed with a voluntary community link. Students listed the following as sites in which they were engaged: churches, resource centres, NGOs, pre-primary or educare centres, primary schools, parastatals (as trainers), local government, literacy classes and adult centres.

3.1.6 Prior qualifications

Sixty percent of students had Matric (now Further Education and Training Certificates), 16% had Standard 9 (Grade 11) and 24% had Standard 8 (Grade 10) (Centre for Adult and Continuing Education, June 1996).

3.2 1998–9 cycle

In 1998 there was a dramatic increase in the number of students registered. Out of over 200 applications, 153 students were accepted of which 93 were female (61%).

As many places as possible were made available by operating two groups in parallel. The second group was initiated to accommodate the Department of Education's newly appointed ABET facilitators who joined the process late in the recruitment period and all these applications were accepted (CACE Certificate team report, 23/03/98). Students came from a wide variety of contexts.

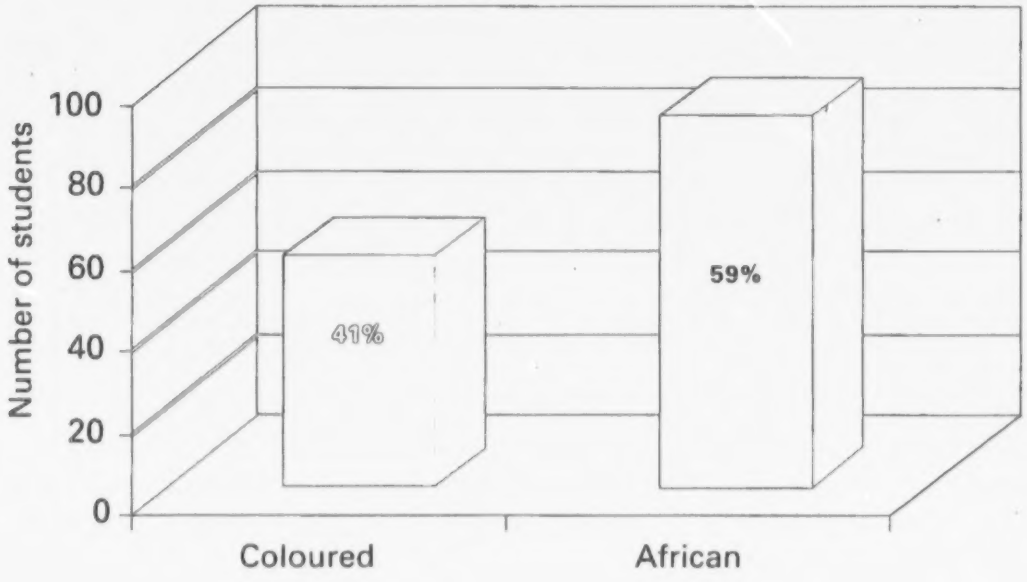

Figure 3.4 1998 Admission profile by race

3.2.1 Gender

The gender breakdown was 61% female and 39% male. The figures for gender distribution across race are not available.

3.2.2 Language

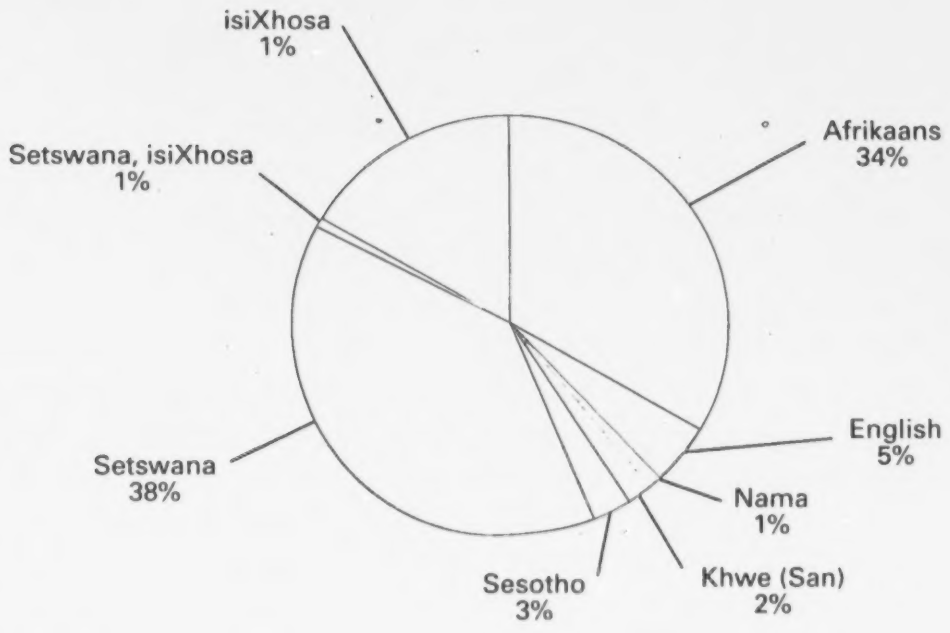

Figure 3.5 1998 Admission profile by language

An even greater variety of language groups were represented in this cycle, including minority languages such as Nama and Khwe. Tswana speakers were the majority in line with the greater number of students from the Kimberley region.

3.2.3 Rural/urban profile

The narrative report for May–December 1998 lists the number of rural students as 83 and urban students as 61. However, this includes the towns of Springbok, De Aar and Upington, the economies of which are largely based on surrounding agriculture and which could thus be considered rural. Light industry in Upington for example consists of farm machinery and related equipment.

3.2.4 Age

Forty-nine percent of students were in the 20–29 age group, 40% in the 30–39 age group and the remaining 11% were above 40 years.

3.2.5 Employment sectors

The range of employment sectors represented on the course was as follows:

- 43 students were from the Department of Education ABET Unit;
- 4 were from Department of Education schools (not adult);
- 7 were pre-school workers;
- 15 were ABET facilitators (outside the Department of Education);
- 9 were pension clerks from the Department of Welfare;
- 6 were from Correctional Services (three inmates);
- 2 were nutrition advisors from the Department of Health;

- 31 were unemployed people;
- 21 were employed in other sectors; and
- for 9 students, information was not available.

(Narrative report, May–December 1998)

The majority of students on this cycle were employed, although 14% were not.

3.2.6 Prior qualifications

Seventy-two percent of students had a Matric qualification, 18% had Standard 9 (Grade 11) and 8% had Standard 8 or Grade 10. CACE used the principle of recognition of prior learning (RPL) to recruit students and those with substantial organisational, community or adult education experience were accepted with less than Standard 10 qualifications (ibid.:8).

3.3 Comparison across two cycles

Both cycles show extremely diverse student profiles, a factor which CACE believes has at least two advantages: it strengthens the course, enabling students to gain a deeper cultural understanding of diversity, and it lays the basis for a future network of adult educators. There is some evidence that the latter has happened.

Although Afrikaans speakers make up 67,7% of the Northern Cape language population (EMIS Unit, 1998), the percentage of Afrikaans speakers on the two Certificate cycles averages 39%. The higher numbers of African students on the courses are no doubt a reflection of the deliberate strategy to recruit students from disadvantaged rural and urban communities. The fact that the number of Afrikaans speakers is nevertheless higher than that of the Advanced Diploma could be seen as evidence of the same strategy, as far greater numbers of Afrikaans speakers from poor rural towns are students on this course than on the Advanced Diploma.

In the first cycle, students tended to be economically poorer but had a stronger history of community involvement. Students from the second cycle, by contrast, had higher numbers of employed students but a younger, less politicised profile (CACE staff member, 11/09/00).

4. MOTIVATION FOR TAKING THE COURSE

In the first cycle (1996–7), most students expressed clear motivations for enrolling; indicating either community-oriented social goals or work-related professional goals, or a combination of these. This is illustrated by the following sample of responses to the interview questions: 'What made you decide to enrol for the course?' or 'Why were you interested in the CACE course?':

> *'I was interested in the CACE courses because I wanted to develop the area I'm living in and also its community.'*
>
> (female student, rural)

> *'I was working for an organisation (an NGO involved in ABET) here in Kimberley and they told us that there would be a course here in Kimberley and it is about adult education and because we are working in the field and then we felt interested to study further, to know more about ABET and about the learners.'*
>
> (female student, rural)

'We worked with people some of whom were illiterate and some unemployed, so the content of the course, the information we got would have helped me in my work if I was still in the resource centre.'

(male student, urban, then employed at an NGO, currently by Correctional Services)

In the second cycle (1998–9) students' reasons for enrolling were more pragmatic: those employed by the ABET Unit were advised to enrol for the course and many seized this as an opportunity for further study. On the other hand, one student says that she had no idea what she was getting into and did not want to study for two years; she had just been hired as an ABET facilitator and told that she had to go along and register. Others hoped that the course would in some way lead to work, and there were some who hoped to gain knowledge and skills to plough back into their communities:

'Well, the reason I did the CACE course was simply because I was doing adult education, so then they offered me a bursary to study.'

(male student, rural)

'We were all unemployed … We applied. The Department of Education advertised the posts in the local newspaper and they asked for at least a Matric as a requirement. For that reason, we applied for the jobs and … the first training we got after we were appointed … CACE people came to explain to us what CACE was about in case we were interested, etc.'

(female student, Upington)

'It was for the sake of the illiteracy in the community. I want to develop the community and literacy. That is what made me enrol in the ABET course.'

(translated from Afrikaans) (male student, Upington, urban)

5. COMPLETION RATES AND RESULTS: COMPARISON ACROSS TWO CYCLES

5.1 1996–7 cycle

The overall completion rate for the first cycle was 65%.

Out of the 77 students who registered for the course in 1996, 73 sustained their attendance and 54 passed the first year. During 1997, all 54 students remained actively engaged with their studies and 50 succeeded. This constitutes a 70% success rate for the first year of study and a 92% success rate for the second year of study. This is a remarkable achievement for a distance education course for students with no previous experience of tertiary education and often no formal school-leaving qualification. It is well above the Open University average (section 5.4 of Chapter 2).

As shown in Figure 3.6 below, the completion rate for men was considerably lower than that for women. There is no indication as to why this should be so. The only male student interviewed from this cycle who did not complete the course cited ill health as the reason.

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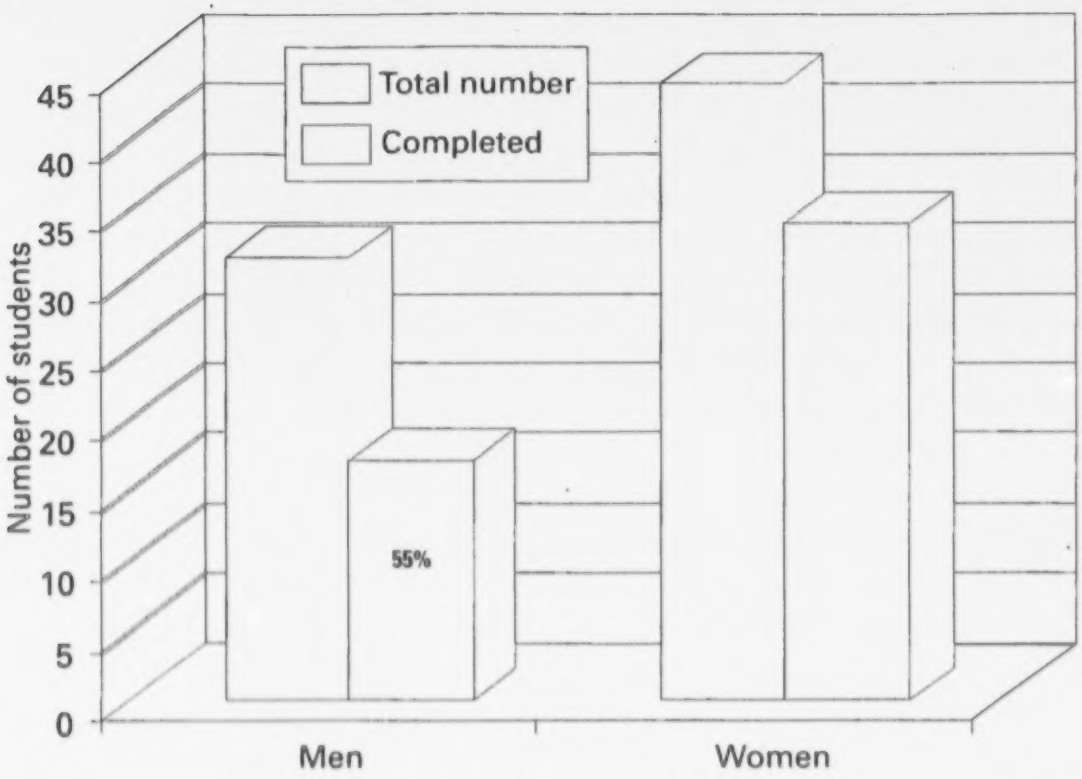

Figure 3.6 1996–7 Completion rate by gender

5.1.1 Reasons for not completing the course

Fifty-seven percent of the original intake were unemployed and it would appear from an undated DFID Review Report by CACE (probably at the end of 1997) that about 14% of those who were unemployed dropped out during the first year of the course. Less than half the number of urban-based students who finished the first year completed the second year. The corresponding completion rate for rural students was much higher (84%). It is possible that the lack of clarity about whether or not the Department of Education would employ Certificate graduates at the end of the year contributed to this marked decline in numbers, especially amongst those who had hoped for jobs as a result of doing the course.

On the sample of students who returned questionnaires, however, there is no correlation between work status and failure to complete the course. Nevertheless, this sample is, by the nature of the research, self-selected and therefore probably contains largely those who have managed to use the course in some way regardless of whether they completed it or not. There is no correlation between highest standard passed (previous education level) and non-completion; prior experience seems to be a more significant factor in success. There is no correlation between results obtained and the first language of the student.

5.2 1998–9 cycle

The completion rate in 1998–9 was 66,6%.

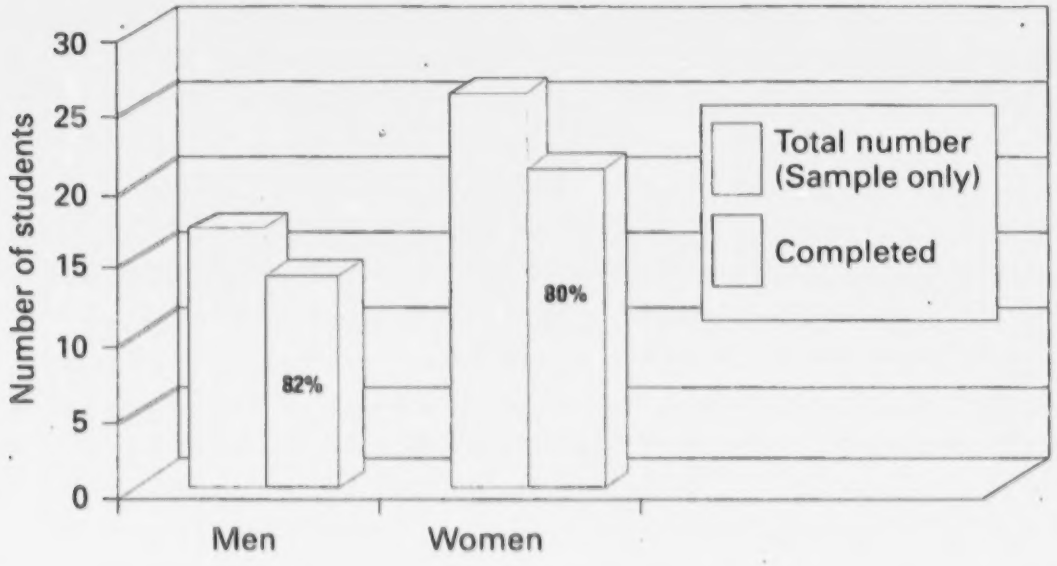

Figure 3.7 1998–9 Completion rate by gender (sample only)

In this cycle, on the sample of questionnaires returned, the completion rate for men and women was almost equal[3]. While almost all students who registered for the second year of study completed it (129 out of 135), 33% failed the course overall. Many of these students have since passed the course by resubmitting assignments. The fact that so few students dropped out in either year is significant (nine in 1998, six in 1999).

5.2.1 Reasons for not completing the course

CACE staff feel that the reason many students did not succeed in the second year is that they were overloaded. CACE had tried to compensate for what they perceived to be a lack of job opportunities for Certificate graduates in ABET by consulting students and adding in an extra module on ***Training Small Business Developers***, something 'that seemed to offer the potential to make an impact in a community even if the people never got formally employed' (CACE staff member, 11/09/01). However, both the modules for that semester were practically orientated and required a lot of work on the students' part. The lecturer feels that this was the major reason they lost students. Unemployment was not a significant factor among those who dropped out.

5.2.2 1998–9 results

Most students cluster in the 50–59% range with only one student achieving results of above 80%. Of the interview sample, 34% of women gained second-class passes as opposed to 6% of men, and women did better overall.

It is interesting to note that two of the top students are inmates of Correctional Services. While they may have had more time to study than other students, interviews show that the course had a profound effect on them and has motivated them to achieve in other ways. (This is discussed further in section 7, later.)

Students in the Kimberley region achieved the best results overall, while half of all Afrikaans speakers achieved over 60% as compared to a third of students from other language groups. The top students, however, represented a spread of all language groups. It is also important to remember that African language speakers are at a disadvantage in learning through a non-cognate language and will generally have had a poorer education background than Afrikaans speakers. Lower marks are not necessarily an indicator of lesser competence.

5.3 Factors influencing success on the course

One factor contributing to success could be the amount of support and networking available. It is possible that those students who worked well together in study groups and taught in or near the same site also did better overall; evidence of three students in Upington would support this.

Those who had only a Standard 8 had the highest failure rate but some nevertheless achieved first class passes. Those who had Matric achieved better results overall. Among those students who had Standard 9 or Matric, previous level of education was a factor in determining the final mark achieved but not in determining pass or failure rates. Those with Matric had a 13% failure rate as opposed to 0% for those with Standard 9.

It might have been expected that those who were closely connected to community projects of some kind would do better as they had a ready-made context in which to apply their learning. However, community involvement was not a clear predictor of success.

6. STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES OF THE COURSE

The findings presented in this section are taken from an analysis of the questionnaires returned (30% response rate) and interviews conducted with 74 students (28 from the first cycle and 46 from the second) selected to ensure a spread of urban/rural, different regions and those who did and did not complete the course. The most striking aspect of these interviews was the enthusiasm with which students participated in the process and the joy with which they recounted their experiences on the course and the various ways in which they have been able to apply what they learnt.

> *'When Nomvuyo phoned me and said could I come for an interview, I didn't waste really any time, I did not miss the date. I count the days, but I told Jonathan, no, I would be coming, don't worry because I want really to be interviewed.'*
>
> (female student, trainer for Department of Labour, rural)

While there were some exceptions to this, for example, one questionnaire was returned untouched with a letter explaining that the student had never found a job and therefore had not been able to apply anything he learnt, the vast majority of responses were positive, and several respondents complained that there was not enough space to fill in all the ways in which the Certificate course had affected their lives. The questionnaire sample, as already stated, was self-selected and therefore those who found the course beneficial were more likely to return it. However, there were eight responses from students who did not complete the course.

6.1 Experiences of different modules

Based on the questionnaires, the modules that students considered most useful were:

Module	Number of responses for the most useful module
Organising Skills	31
Facilitating Adult Learning	27
Research Methods	20
Contextual Studies	14
ABET for Development	12
Training Small Business Developers	10
Teaching Literacy or Mother-tongue Literacy	8
Race, Class, Gender & Culture (a workshop)	5

Table 3.1 Modules identified as most useful

Areas that emerged most strongly related to organising skills and facilitating learning. These are the skills that students have managed to apply across a wide range of contexts and sectors in a myriad of different projects. Those modules that appear lower on the list reflect the fact that only a small percentage of past students is currently working in ABET and/or literacy and that only some are actively engaged in small business development. In interviews, however, it emerged that many students are called on to use their business skills to assist with writing business plans for local development projects.

Questions about how students experienced particular modules invariably elicited a flow of examples of how students had used the skills they learnt, so it is almost impossible to separate students' experience of the course from a description of its impacts.

6.1.1 Organising Skills

> *'We used what we learnt on that module to organise your visit here!'*
>
> (informants in De Aar region to researcher)

Contexts in which students have used these skills include:

Initiating new community projects

> *'Let's start with **Organising Skills**. It taught me to organise myself. Like when we were working on the project to set up the crisis centre ... **Organising Skills** equipped me to do all those things, you know, to be able to build from the bottom and **Research** plays just as great a role because it's not about just standing up and doing it. It needs planning. It needs an enormous amount of planning and you must be able to be direct. You must be able to be factual. I'm specifically emphasising those two subjects because those are the things that you work with nowadays.'*
>
> (translated from Afrikaans) (male student, rural)

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Community meetings and running workshops
This student attributes her position as an official in the ANC Women's League to the confidence CACE gave her:

> *'Yes. I am using the **Organising Skills** module because I'm now in so many organisations ... Like when we're holding a meeting. I can now draft my own agenda and ... where we can organise something like a meeting or a workshop. I do use that ... the modules more because when I forget, I go and open my books and check what should I do.'*
>
> (female student, rural)

Recruiting and mobilising ABET learners
The large numbers of students attending this facilitator's centre seem to point to her success:

> *'I learnt so many things because I was a person who don't know about attending meetings and now a lecturer, Mr J, he made me so to get interesting to attend meetings because when I were at CACE I didn't even know about how the agendas and everything is going. But Mr J he teach me so that now I am able to call community meetings and run my own meeting, the agenda and everything. ...[meetings] about literacy and to motivate the people to come to the classes. How the classes will help them in the future. To encourage them to attend classes and you must learn other skills, not just to read and write and handwork.'*
>
> (female student, ABET facilitator, rural)

Political meetings in the run-up to the local elections

> *'...because I am a candidate elect. I need to attend meetings and chair meetings, how to chair meetings, how to write agendas.'*
>
> (female student, rural)

The researcher who observed this student in action confirms that the meeting was well run, 'democratic procedures were adhered to and decisions taken with the participation of everyone'. The student was also able to defuse potential conflicts (researcher observation report, 28/11/00).

6.1.2 Facilitating Adult Learning

Students credit this module with assisting in their work as ABET facilitators as well as in running workshops in other sectors, such as Health:

> *'It helped me very much because I learnt about how to deal with the adults, how to read adults. For an example, in the class I know how to interact with the adults. I learnt to respect them. And I'm not always to cough out what I know, I also listen to them – what they want, what they know, what they need.'*
>
> (female student, ABET facilitator, rural)

The regional coordinator for this student's centre used almost exactly the same words to describe her teaching style.

Other students talk about how their relationship with learners has changed:

> *'Most of the time we are good friends because we are not afraid of each other ... I learned from the learners and they learn from me. This is what I like.'*
>
> (female student, rural)

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6.1.3 Research Methods

> *'**Research** was terribly interesting because it was a new field that I moved into that was really very, very interesting.'*
>
> (male student, rural)

This module and the research project seem to have served as a catalyst for students to get involved in new areas:

> *'[The] **Research** was also extremely interesting because at that time you could get involved with many components. You see, we did [look at the issue of] child abuse. And we … had never gone into the courts or the police or the prisons, but the research opened all those doors for us. People still always have those doors [open] … If they see us, they remember us. So it brought out our self-image. It gave us self-assurance because now we can begin to conduct interviews with people. We can write reports which we could never have done before. And we're not afraid to tackle anything any more.'*
>
> (female student, facilitator, urban)

Other students describe how they now feel confident to do research all the time:

> *'Going to the library, seeking information, how to teach people, what to do, and what not to do. Like conflict management and communication and so on.'*
>
> (female student, health worker, rural)

6.1.4 Contextual Studies

> *'Ja, what was interesting to me was **Contextual Studies** because it allowed you to focus a lot on your own background and that of your learners and so on.'*
>
> (male student, urban)

> *'For me personally because we grew up in, let's say, in disadvantaged communities, I no longer feel … if someone acts differently then I would think: This person really has no manners. [Now] you always wonder why the person is behaving in that way. What is the reason? What makes him say that or do that?'*
>
> (translated from Afrikaans) (female student, Upington)

> *'The modules I would like to identify is the **Contextual Studies** module, that was very good to me, and I think to other people too because it taught me a lot about my context, about where I come from and about the contexts of the other people, about the cultures of the other people, to respect the cultures of the other people, to respect the person and so on. And because we are a diverse nation in South Africa there was that notion of undermining the other culture, only thinking that your culture was the best one, it was a good one, but through these **Contextual Studies**, I learned a lot.'*
>
> (inmate and ABET facilitator)

A tutor describes how working through this module with students helped him a great deal 'to understand how to … try and fight racism'. The interviews that he did with students on racism 'broadened [my] vision enormously' (Advanced Diploma student and tutor, former principal, rural).

6.1.5 ABET for Development

A student working with adult learners in ABET found this module 'inspiring':

> *'It also helped me to not see other people as having nothing in their head, as just looking at somebody who wants to fill their heads, but to know that everybody has his past, has learnt something, even though he was not at school, but he knows something.'*
>
> (female facilitator, rural)

The same student is chairperson of the Local Development Forum and found that the Small Business component of this module helped her to get projects started: 'We can do projects ourselves'. Many CACE students are asked for advice and help with business plans in their communities.

Students working in the Social Services Department find the Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) tool taught to them in this module particularly helpful in facilitating the process of development planning in small towns.

One of the students, an inmate, generally managed to pass on his learning to others in some way. An assignment for the ***Training Small Business Developers*** module developed into an entrepreneur's training class until a change in management meant that he could no longer continue. This student is continuing his studies in Business Management and feels when he comes out he can call himself 'a businessman. And I can also teach other people how to be a businessman as well. This one is boosting me as a person, it's boosting my morale'.

Other students have used this module creatively to take on new tasks:

> *'There by the point of Business, what I can share with you is this. At school we were told to raise up, each and every class must raise R1 000, target per class. So because of the knowledge I got from CACE by doing* ***Business*** *and* ***Research Methods****; that helped me a lot because I was able to raise R1 000.*
>
> (female student, primary school teacher, rural)

6.1.6 Outcomes-Based Education (OBE)

CACE organised extensive workshops on OBE that looked at the history of OBE within South Africa, but also at issues of the technical implementation of OBE:

> *'Participants came that were not necessarily people that were on this particular [CACE] course, those people came from the adult learning centres and were selected by the ABET division themselves and they were brought to one place. But it was a week-long programme where there was also support, additional support provided through letter and e-mail exchange between ourselves ... We got people in from SAQA also to give an input.'*
>
> (CACE staff member)

This workshop was valued and cross-fertilisation has taken place in several instances with Certificate students advising or assisting teachers in day schools with OBE. Those students who work in schools found this module particularly useful:

> *'And here at school ... it was a struggle in the beginning, but since I have this experience from CACE I run smoothly with the OBE. Inspectors were here, the results they could see. When they come into my class they can see that there's really an improvement.'*
>
> (female teacher, rural)

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Another student was able to help her husband:

> *'And the thing I'm very proud of that. The schools are doing OBE now and they are not on the level of the ... us. And my husband have got my file and I said to him: Just take this file and read through it. And then you will know what to do ... Then you can just make* ***'n aanpassing*** *(adaptation) for the kids because we are doing it for adult learners. And I tell him how to work his approach. How to ... they must help each other in the groups because the old school system is different from an OBE. And I show him all my assessment criteria and help him how to use it. . And the other day he said: Okay, ek het dit onder die knie [I've mastered it now].'*
>
> (rural employee of Department of Social Services, bilingual interview)

6.1.7 Computer Skills

All students greatly appreciated gaining access to computer skills. Many were frustrated that the time for this was short and that so many students needed to work on so few computers.

6.2 Learning processes

Students mention their appreciation of the different approach to learning and teaching taken by the Certificate:

> *'But to me the knowledge and the skills I have gained from CACE makes a great difference, because, in this sense, when I started with CACE I thought ... the lecturers are going to teach me in the sense of a teachers' training school that we have to teach in, let me say, in older methods. But now I can see the difference because you've been equipped and empowered. There is – it facilitates – how can I put it – you are no longer using the teaching system or methods, you are just facilitating. You have to be involved. You have to be part and parcel with the learners. You have to be approachable and flexible.'*
>
> (female student, rural)

Older learners, apprehensive about returning to learning at this stage in their lives, were also pleasantly surprised:

> *'Okay the first time it was not that good when you are grown up like me, you felt a little unsure but in the middle I found out this is very interesting. It was ... interesting because of the methods. When I started I thought these people are coming to teach me and they tell me what to do and it was really frustrating but inside. And then it became very interesting.'*
>
> (female student, then a literacy teacher in a NGO, rural)

Several students mentioned that the three lecturers complemented each other and that they learnt something from each of them:

> *'I think it was outstanding, really. Well, X with her gentleness put something inside you. You can be gentle but she pulled so many positive things out of you with that nice gentle manner of hers ... Y disciplined us very strongly. She woke us up. Z if you didn't know him you would think he had a [difficult] nature but it's not so. Each of them woke something up in you, brought something out of you. They were all our friends in the sense that you could be open with them, you could be honest with them if there was any problem and they would handle it well and they treated you as an individual...'*
>
> (female student, rural)

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6.3 Language

Students in the Springbok region in particular mention the enormous advantage of having study material available in Afrikaans. Two Setswana-speaking respondents talked about the difficulty of expressing complex thoughts in English but nevertheless appreciated the development of their proficiency and academic skills in English. All lecturers also mentioned the issue of language as one of the strengths of the course and a point of celebration at the end of the second cycle.

During the 1998–9 cycle there were eight languages represented on the course. CACE is committed to multilingualism and staff set up a variety of processes on the course to promote all languages and make sure that as far as possible students were able to express themselves in the language of their choice.

Some examples of these processes are:

- use translation where possible;
- use small group discussions;
- encourage students to ask questions and debate in the language they feel comfortable with;
- build a culture of respect for other students' points of view;
- recruit tutors who speak the languages of the students and serve as the support system for students;
- make oral assessment a part of continuous assessment – students are assessed in English, Afrikaans, Setswana and isiXhosa; and
- encourage students to mix languages when writing their assignments.

(Dayile and Geidt, 1998: 7)

Study materials were available in Afrikaans but not in other African languages, which may have disadvantaged some speakers of African languages in written assignments. However, there are no dramatic patterns of difference in course results.

6.4 Academic support

Students found the academic support psychologically and practically helpful:

> *'Ja, the academic support was inspiring in the sense that because the people themselves who were the academics were inspiring because they could motivate you. Wherever there's a part in the course which is a little bit depressing, or caused depression in you, they could motivate you, they could tell you, "No, that's not the end of the world, that's not the way things are going". They could support you by counselling, they could support you with many things.'*
>
> (male student, urban)

> *'CACE made everything very accessible for us. They went out of their way with resources for example. When our resource centre didn't have enough resources, they brought us books.'*
>
> (female student, rural)

Study groups were a significant feature of the academic support and some groups supported each other through the course even when tutors were unavailable for part of the time.

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Students have strong feelings on the profile of the ideal tutor:

> *'It needs people who have the same background and preferably not teachers who come directly out of the schools … And also [people who] have been involved in development for a while.'*
>
> (female tutor, rural)

Others comment that different language backgrounds cause problems if students and tutor do not speak the same language fluently. One of the tutors and past Certificate and Advanced Diploma students points out that because it was the first time the courses were offered in the Northern Cape, it was difficult to find people who understood the course as it took a very different approach to learning and teaching and it was not well-known.

Tutors relate how they were given phone cards and encouraged to phone each other and discuss issues. This then became the basis for a support network that still functions. Informal support groups also grew out of some of the study groups: students who studied together phone one another to discuss problems that arise in their daily work, either in ABET or in community projects: 'Sometimes we get problems, you just phone someone and then we help each other' (group interview, Kuruman).

6.5 Students' and lecturers' comments about the course

6.5.1 Students' comments

Relevance of curriculum

Eighty-three percent of respondents stated that CACE was the most useful course they had attended, 7% said it was about the same as other courses, and 4% said it was less useful than other courses.

When asked how often they were able to apply what they learnt from CACE in their work, 78% said always, 7% often, and 3% never (two people, one an insurance representative, one unemployed). There was no gender difference in responses.

Students appreciated the degree to which the curriculum and materials were adapted to their needs and contexts:

> *'The academic experience was fantastic, because to me CACE is unique. CACE wrote its syllabi to adapt them to us and it was not, how can I put it, something that often happens. If, for example, you go and study in a field, you work specifically according to certain guidelines but CACE set it up so that the studies fitted us. CACE came to us with studies, not us to CACE.*
>
> (translated from Afrikaans) (male student, Springbok region)

> *'I think that CACE also brought in a lot from our cultural traditions, our circumstances, into their courses and it wasn't something alien out of a "history" that we didn't know, like the history of Jan van Riebeeck (the white man who "discovered" the Cape of Good Hope) that we were not aware of, but it was things that we knew about and even the issues that were addressed … we knew exactly what came up there … we experienced it. That's why we could identify with it. The experience was there. That's why it was so good.'*
>
> (male student, De Aar region)

However, students in the Springbok region felt that more of their 'unique' context could have been incorporated into case studies and examples.

The relevance of the curriculum for those students working in public adult learning centres is discussed in Chapter 4.

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Weaknesses

Researchers pushed very hard to try and elicit opinions on areas of weakness in the content or delivery of the course. However, 90% of respondents said that there were none: 'Really, there's nothing bad that I can really tell about CACE, to be really honest, really' (female student, health worker).

One student responded:

> *'Ja, of course there were some weaknesses, but not so many because I did not focus on them. What I found from the course stimulated my morals so it makes me somehow blind to looking at the weaknesses. So I only looked at the good side of the course.'*
>
> (male student, urban)

Others raised issues that were not to do with content or learning processes but with administration. One student's payment of fees had not been recorded when the administrator was ill and she was embarrassed to be told she had not paid and to have no proof that she had. Others mentioned being sued for outstanding fees.

The other major negative issue raised was recognition of the Certificate by the province and nationally. This is discussed more fully in Chapter 4.

Many students feel that there is an urban bias in the students selected to go on the Certificate course:

> *'Oh yes, one of my criticisms is that the concentration falls much more in the cities or big centres - Upington, Kimberley - because it is cheaper to get all the students there. While the real need and lack of human resources and the need for literacy is on the farms and in the rural areas. And not one of the students that complete [the course] will be prepared to come and say, "Right, let me go and work on the farms". And now there are two or three students from the rural areas chosen to do the course ... and they can never fill the needs on the farms and so on.'*
>
> (male student, rural)

6.5.2 Lecturers' comments

A lecturer on the Certificate course feels that there are three modules that are very important in this course - ***Contextual Studies, Facilitating Adult Learning*** and ***Organising Skills***: 'They are very relevant modules and students feel good about doing them. And also they are not abstract.'

Problems mentioned by lecturers are: there was not enough time to cover the ***Mother-tongue Literacy*** and ***Training Small Business Developers*** modules in sufficient depth, and students needed more time on computers and even more practical experience and contact with communities.

Logistical and resourcing problems also had an impact on lecturers' ability to meet students' needs: often assignments were not returned soon enough (the postal system playing a part) and they did not follow up on students who did not submit assignments when this could possibly have prevented some dropouts. However, they worked constantly 'at the length of their tether' and under those circumstances it was very difficult to keep up with individual students' situations. It was also 'hard to be creative'. In terms of support, the gap between study weekends was often too long, a concern echoed by students in the Springbok region. Problems in tutorial groups could not always be adequately addressed, as suitable tutors were hard to find.

6.6 Stakeholders' perceptions and comments

A former member of staff, who was one of the three who first set up the ABET Unit in 1995 and is now a youth commissioner, feels that the model used to deliver the course and

> *'the kind of support that the CACE project has managed to build into this project with students ...[is] quite impressive. I think in terms of the success rate, that has a very great influence on*

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> *the success rate, or rather the retention of students maybe: very few students drop out as far as I can remember. And for... You know, specially for a province like the Northern Cape, I think it's remarkable given the differences and the geographic sort of nature of this province.'*

She is considering the same model of student support for a pilot project of the National Youth Commission.

Officials in the ABET Unit feel that the course succeeded in creating committed ABET workers who are able to grasp new things quickly, to plan thoroughly and to carry out their work efficiently (interview, 31/10/00).

The deputy-director of the Social Services Department in the Northern Cape testifies to the speed with which newcomers in the department who were studying with CACE were able to adapt to the new development-oriented approach reflected in the 1994 White Paper for Social Welfare. He sees the Certificate as 'a means to capacitate staff to take control over situation in smaller towns' and testifies that after the two years of study newcomers are more involved than other staff members and 'have no fear about new approaches to development' (telephonic interview, 02/03/2001).

The person in charge of education and training in one section of De Beers (mining Company) did not know very much about the courses offered by CACE and was not able to comment on the impact of the courses. In another branch, the worker in the company who completed the Certificate course, currently a clerk and shop steward, has not been asked to participate in training or other adult education activities although he was asked to send in his papers. To improve CACE's visibility in this sector, marketing in future should include the mining network.

6.7 Comment

The very positive reactions to the Certificate course can be seen against a backdrop where access to tertiary education was almost non-existent. At the time of writing, the new [illegible]gher Education Institute is in the process of being set up, but at that time there was no tertiary institution in the Northern Cape so people had to travel long distances and stay away from home for long periods in order to study. Low-income levels and high unemployment in the province mean that university fees are beyond the reach of the population from which Certificate students were drawn. Nevertheless, even when pushed very hard to name problems or things that should be changed if the Certificate course is run again, informants did not mention anything except the issue of recognition.

It could also be said that students at higher levels of the education system learn to become critical and that few develop sufficient confidence or distance at the beginning of tertiary education to analyse the content of courses critically. It is possible that the success students have experienced in applying so much of the course has minimised their memories of parts of the course that may not have suited their purposes to the same extent. However, the strength and clarity of many of the responses make it clear that the same impact would not have been made by just any course. The highly contextualised and participatory nature of the learning combined with the nurturing approach to academic support would have made this a powerful experience.

The students' perception of a bias towards urban students is not in fact accurate: on both courses the number of rurally based students outweighed urban students; in 1996, 62% of students were rurally-based and in 1998, 58%. CACE and the ABET Unit had a deliberate strategy of trying to recruit two students from each small rural town (sometimes this was not possible because of distance and the conditions of roads) but a look at the database confirms the wide distribution of students across all regions. Also the Certificate database lists students in rural towns such as Springbok and De Aar as 'urban' while these towns depend on agriculture for much of their income and could legitimately be called rural. The percentage of rural students would then increase. The Northern Cape urban/rural ratio is 70,1% urban to 29,9% non-urban (Statistics South Africa 2000:9) so this

constitutes a strong contribution to capacity building in previously under-resourced communities. Reaching those in need of education and training on farms remains a concern.

6.8 Recommendations emerging from interviews

Students made the following suggestions in relation to the course:

- put lectures/workshops on tape for those who cannot make study weekends;
- provide clearer explanations of tasks during study-weekends (students feel that they often only understand exactly what was expected of them from the previous study-weekend tasks when they get to the next one);
- arrange computer classes so that there can be smaller groups who can be 'given more time and detail';
- spend more time on the ***Training Small Business Developers*** section of the course and strengthen the financial skills component. This seems to be helping ABET learners at all levels of the system as well: A tutor mentions that although ***Small Business*** is taught at Level 4 in the public adult learning centres, students from other levels often join the class because they want these skills: 'Some of them are business women and business men even in Level 1, they are so interested to have skills increase therefore they were also allowed to join the groups';
- include information on funding agencies and how to approach them; and
- include 'practical skills' (presumably some idea of how to address the need for income-generating skills in ABET).

The ABET Unit feels there should be a greater focus on OBE and how to plan learning programmes; also that students should learn about unit standards.

The following suggestions were made in relation to tutors:

- tutors should only be people who have completed the CACE courses;
- tutors should not be school teachers;
- tutors should have some knowledge and experience in development; and
- tutors need information earlier in order to prepare better.

Students felt it was essential to develop better communication between CACE and the Department of Education with regard to the 'remuneration packages' of CACE students. This is a continuing source of friction despite the Department of Education having recognised the Certificate before the national accreditation process was complete. Even though students with the Certificate are given an extra notch, communication problems persist.

7. IMPACT OF THE CERTIFICATE COURSE

This section describes the impact of the course on students' personal and professional lives. The impact of the course on students working in ABET either in the Department of Education or in other sectors will be discussed in Chapter 4 and the impacts on students working in a variety of roles in communities, in Chapter 5.

7.1 Personal impact

> *'OK, how I found it: highly stimulating. I never thought I would study at a university but CACE made it possible, especially for us, let me call us those who had been left out. To see that you could do it and that was very revealing, because you sit in your own little world, in your own cocoon and CACE made things happen with you as a person until you realised that you can do it, you don't have to stand back for anyone and all those tutors that worked together with our lecturers, they gave you self-confidence. They made you realise that you are an individual, a person and … that if you believe in something, you can do it and that you can reach your full potential through it'*
>
> (translated from Afrikaans) (female student, De Aar region, rural)

This quote captures the triple dimension of the impact that many students describe: the excitement of access to higher education, the sense of breaking out into a new world, and the confidence to take on whatever lies ahead.

7.1.1 Identity and self-image

Responding to the question: 'How did the CACE course affect your life? (for example, at home, at work, in your community, as a learner)', students mention the following changes (among many others):

- profound personal change: 'Dit het definitief vir my as mens gevorm … Vir my het hulle weer van niets af nuut gemaak, mens gemaak. [It definitely shaped me as a person … They made a new person out of me, a human being]' (male student, NGO worker, rural);
- self-organisation, which is defined by Shor (1993:33) as taking the initiative to transform school and society: 'It gave me an opportunity to improve and develop myself - to improve other people's standard of living, to contribute to the community, to be involved in meetings' (translated from Afrikaans) (female student, urban);
- self-actualisation and independence: 'CACE has helped me to be myself. By doing what I'm doing now for my own community project without any fear of … others thoughts for bringing me down' (female student, urban);
- appreciation of the nature of the learning: 'CACE armed me with a gift which I have to pass to the needy' (male student, inmate); and
- strengthening of values such as honesty, kindness and trust and the courage to 'stand up for what I believe in and to have confidence and admit if I'm wrong' (female student, rural).

Others mention critical thinking, listening skills, persistence and 'positiveness'.

Women, in particular, seem to have developed self-confidence and the courage to speak up in meetings, to participate in or initiate new projects. Twice as many women mention this impact as men:

> *'Well, it affected me powerfully in the sense in the beginning I was rather shy of people. You can ask the others, I sat in this house. I didn't ever really communicate. Why, I don't know. It helped me to climb out of my shell and made me a better person in the sense that I worked with the broader community and I had the candour to communicate with people and to realise that I can offer my help. I had the assurance when I work daily with parents and they have to fill in a form then they say they can't read or write, then I could communicate with that person and with the greatest self-confidence and say join the night school, join ABET, do this, do that … No, it made my life both outside and inside, in the family, it made me a much deeper person.'*
>
> (student, school secretary, involved in domestic violence and other networks, rural)

The interviewer can testify to this respondent's confidence and ability to reflect critically on her own growth.

In more practical terms, students mention being able 'to manage the money and my family' (female student, rural).

The course also affected students' families in various ways. One student's husband helped with the chores so she didn't have 'much burden' on her. An inmate describes how seeing what he had achieved inspired his son who was in Matric last year and gave his family hope that he would find a job when he comes out: 'But now when they have heard what I was doing and what I have achieved, there is just like something injecting light into them.'

Some also mention negative aspects, again related to administrative mix-ups: 'It affect my life at work because you did not give me the chance to write the module I suppose to write and it really embarrassed me' (male student, inmate).

7.1.2 Recognition and status

Many students now see themselves as launched on new life paths. Goffman (1961:127) points out that:

> *'traditionally the term career has been reserved for those who expect to enjoy rises laid out within a respectable profession. The term is coming to be used, however, in a broadened sense to refer to any social strand of any person's course through life ... Such a career is not something that can be brilliant or disappointing; it can no more be a success than a failure'.*

Many students report a sense of new purpose and direction. One student combines his own sense of being on a new track with a sense of social responsibility for others:

> *'It was great, really it was great. This was a great course in itself because it opened a whole new world to me in particular. I realised that I had some abilities in me which I didn't know I had before. I never thought about being an educator before. So after attending the course that is where I saw there were certain things I could do. That I could actually get involved with teaching people trying to empower people, make them realise that they are not useless and that there is still hope for them, more especially being in prison.'*
>
> (male student, inmate)

Others testify to the value the course had in personal terms in building self-esteem and in providing access to work:

> *'I had to leave school early owing to certain circumstances and they really built me up, those CACE courses, and that's why I can stand here today and be proud and because I am working, thanks to CACE.'*
>
> (female facilitator, urban)

Students have a sense of new and enhanced status in their own eyes, and sometimes in the eyes of their community. Many, however, feel that until now the Department of Education has not seen them with the same eyes and that the Certificate has not had much value to those in the department. They assume this is because teachers with no adult education qualifications or experience are often appointed in preference to them. This situation is already changing with new departmental policies but it has caused hurt and frustration:

'The thing that makes me want to distance myself from ABET where I am now involved is that they don't recognise our CACE Certificate. Our salary is very low so that tells me that they don't recognise our certificates. And I don't know what methods ABET uses when they appoint us, because there are people who did the CACE courses that are now just sitting in the townships ... What I want to say in relation to ABET is I feel they must put more in because we try our best here on the ground. In my opinion we try very hard, but when it comes to cooperation, they don't participate. Like last year we were very well prepared, we were many facilitators here in the area, but they made us less and the pay also became less. And the training that they offer, at the end of the day you have been through all those different "trainings" and when you are finished, there is nothing that they put into your hand that says you have completed a certain training, there is no piece of paper for that. So that is what makes me cut myself off from ABET.'

(translated from Afrikaans) (female student, urban)

Several students have taken up leadership positions in organisations or local government. This is discussed further in Chapter 5.

7.1.3 Academic goals and plans

Several learners who came into the course without having finished their schooling made remarkable progress, one eventually teaching Economics which he had never studied to fellow inmates at Standard 10 level, using the 'skills CACE taught me'. These students show the value of RPL in unlocking potential and opening new doors.

Many students mention academic skills such as report writing, research, drawing up business plans and say that they are consistently asked by people in their communities to assist with these things.

All those who returned questionnaires were interested in the Diploma to be offered in 2002. A list of the subjects students would like to study is included as Appendix 8. The wide range of suggestions reflects the variety of work and interests that students have.

As an example of the scale of learning taking place, in one small community, one past student is busy with a Teacher's Diploma, another is studying History and African Politics through UNISA; and a third is doing a Business Administration course at SA Technikon.

One student has won a scholarship to study adult education through UNISA. Two others are planning to study further but although they wish to remain in Adult Education, they hope to study in order to move into formal schooling as it provides security and they have to plan for their old age.

The fact that seven students were accepted on to the Advanced Diploma (Level 7) and managed to succeed, albeit among the weaker students, indicates significant development of learning and thinking skills. Similarly, the depth of application of many components of the Certificate suggests that these components could be recognised at Level 5.

7.1.4 Self-understanding and reflexivity

One student listed on his questionnaire the following effects of the Certificate on his life:

'1. To better understand my own black culture, that was previously obscure.

2. It equipped me better to play a dynamic role as voluntary community worker in my region/province.

3. To awaken the culture of lifelong learning.'

He was one of the students accepted onto the course without a Matric. In an interview he gave an account of his history as an African child growing up in a coloured area that had experienced forced removals of Africans during the apartheid years. He describes how he had been 'in conflict

with my culture'. When he first joined the Certificate, 'the course did not seem very important' but as the course progressed and he heard African students speaking about their cultures and traditions, he began to understand his background and experiences in a new light and this transformed his relationship with his family.

While the student described above is an exceptional example, there are many others who describe similar changes in understanding their own history and context. Mezirow (1981:6) calls this 'perspective transformation' which he defines as:

> *'the emancipatory process of becoming critically aware of how and why the structure of psycho-cultural assumptions has come to constrain the way we see ourselves and our relationships, reconstituting this structure to permit a more inclusive and discriminating integration of experience and acting upon these new understandings'.*

Such dramatic personal change is one of the rarely achieved goals of adult education.

7.1.5 Cultural understanding of diversity

Several students mention 'respect for different opinions, different traditions, different cultures' as something they gained from the course (see 6.1.4 in this chapter).

7.2 Professional impacts

The following page was appended to the completed questionnaire returned by a male student from a rural area in the Kimberley region:

> *The course was very fruitful for me as an individual. It has changed and promoted my life. I have been elected to attend a course at the School of Government UWC which started in February and end in August 2000. With the skills I get from CACE it was easy to be elected and to be accepted by SALGA (South African Local Government Association) in Pretoria.*
>
> *I am today a trainer on IDP (Integrated Development Planning). I am training the municipality in the province. I succeeded in many programmes on local government.*
>
> *In the community things have really changed. I present my speeches professionally now. We are working together as a community, we have bring more projects in the community like one I mentioned on the form, the telecentre. They are communicating now better than other years, jobs are created from the projects in the community. So there is a difference in the community and transformation is taking place. 'Viva CACE Viva'. You make me a real leader.*

This letter illustrates how students' professional lives are often tightly bound up with various community development projects. In writing this report it has often been difficult to separate personal, professional and community impacts. In addition, it is difficult to claim any direct line of impact between a course and the students' subsequent personal or professional development, as she or he is exposed to many other education and training experiences either before or after the course. However, students like the one above state unequivocally that the Certificate course is responsible for where they are today. Samples of training session plans submitted by the researcher who interviewed this student confirm a professional level of skill.

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7.2.1 Employment in ABET

Of the interview sample, 28,5% from the 1996–7 cycle are currently employed by the ABET Unit compared with 43% from the 1998–9 cycle. A letter attached to the questionnaire from one of the students who is employed by the Department of Education expresses his disillusionment with how few of those who completed the Certificate in 1997 are employed. Although some were employed for a two-year period (1998–9), their contracts were not renewed, and their posts were filled by teachers with teaching diplomas and no adult education experience. According to this person, most of the CACE students from that first cycle are unemployed. He feels that adult educators working in the centres cannot 'implement adult learning principles because teachers are using "filling station" methods' (male student, urban). (The issue of students working in public adult learning centres is discussed further in Chapter 4.)

7.2.2 Changes in employment or income

The overall results for both cycles on the questionnaire sample show the following changes in students' employment status after completing the Certificate:

Employment status		Total students (%)	Women (%)	Men (%)
Before the course	**Current**			
temporary	temporary	30%	55%	45%
permanent	permanent	12%	75%	25%
permanent	temporary	7%	50%	50%
temporary	unemployed	12%	38%	62%
unemployed	unemployed	12%	75%	25%
unemployed	temporary	10%	71%	29%
unknown		17%		

Table 3.2 Overall employment patterns

Points of interest include the following:

- The unemployment rate is 24%. This figure includes two inmates in Correctional Services: the figure without these respondents is 21%, which is lower than the national average of 33,9% and the provincial average of 28,5% (Statistics South Africa 2000:40).
- Most students are in temporary jobs (47%).
- More men moved from temporary jobs to being unemployed while more women moved from being unemployed to temporary jobs.
- No student has moved into small business full-time, although 37% of the respondents are involved with small business in some way either as advisor, initiator or member.
- Of the 1998–9 students, 40% of women on the course recorded an increase in income and 8% moved out of unemployment into paid jobs.
- The 1996–7 cycle had a similar effect in increasing income for women, with 55% of female students on the course increasing their income but only one unemployed woman found employment.

Results and employment/income

1996–7 cycle

The 1996–97 sample of students overall shows no correlation between results achieved and change in employment or income; the one man who failed still recorded an increase in income and was the only person to move from a temporary to a permanent job (in a community-based organisation). The two students who did not complete the course both have permanent jobs, while others who did complete the course are unemployed. Fifty-two percent of respondents recorded a change upwards in income, of which 55% were women. One woman moved into paid work, but no unemployed men did. Two students became unemployed and four students who were unemployed when they joined the course remained unemployed, 21% of the sample.

The 1996–7 group of students and educators seems to have borne the brunt of shifting policies on who should be employed in adult learning centres, the uncertainty around the accreditation of the Certificate, and the slowness of the shift within sections of the Department of Education towards recognising the importance of an adult education background in teaching ABET. While there may have been other reasons why the Department of Education did not wish to renew the contracts of this group of students, it is clear that much greater transparency in selection processes and procedures was needed.

Despite the lack of employment in the ABET Unit itself, students are working in a range of sectors. (See Table 3.3 below).

1998–9 cycle

Of the 1998–9 cycle, the numbers who recorded an increase in income are equal for men and women: 44% overall. The percentages who increased their income were higher for rural students (75%) than for urban (25%). The greatest number of students who increased their income are in the 26–35 age group (62%), followed by the 36–45 age group (21%) and the under 25 age group (17%).

Once again there is no correlation between completing the course or gaining high marks on the course and either a change in income or getting a job at all. Even for those who obtained first-class passes, 60% show no increase in income. Conversely, 50% of those who did not complete the course still show an increase in income. Twice the number of unemployed women moved into paid work than unemployed men. The number of men and women losing temporary or permanent jobs to become unemployed is slightly higher for men. The majority of students remain in temporary jobs (39,5%).

Current employment of Certificate students interviewed.

		1996 (28 students)	1998 (46 students)
ABET	Facilitator	5 (1 volunteer)	15
	Supervising teacher	2	3
	Cluster Programme Manager	1	2 (1 now regional coordinator)
Formal schools	Teacher	1	1
	Secretary	2	
ABET (Correctional Services)		1	4 (2 prisoners)
AETASA		1	
CBO/NGO		3 (1 volunteer)	2 (1 volunteer)
Local government		1	5
Self-employed		1	2
Mining		1 clerk	1 (shop steward)
Department of Health		1 cleaner, assistant at mobile clinic	4
Department of Labour		1 trainer	
Department of Social Services			2
Security services		1	
Private sector			1
Studying		1	
Unemployed		5	2
Unknown			2

Table 3.3 Current employment of Certificate interview sample (2000)

The lack of correlation between results and access to higher-level jobs and related economic benefits is puzzling, but can be seen as a question of context. There are limited job opportunities available, and those that are available, are often not in the community in which students are situated and would involve moving or travelling long distances. Economic opportunities that arise are taken by those on hand, not necessarily by the best qualified. Many with top marks remain in administrative posts as there are no other opportunities in the area. However, students often state that they got their present jobs as a direct result of the Certificate course: 'the course has made me a regional coordinator for the Namaqualand region and has done all the good for me' (male student formerly an ABET facilitator now a project coordinator for SANTA).

Three students reported that they were employed by the Independent Electoral Commission during the last local elections because they were known to have good organising and other skills from CACE.

8. CONCLUSIONS

This section discusses the findings in relation to the research questions.

To what extent have programmes facilitated by CACE fitted the needs of participants and their communities in terms of personal careers and ETDPs? (research question 1)

Overall, 148 students completed the Certificate during the two cycles. Of these 67% students were women and 76% were from rural communities. The Certificate has therefore made a significant contribution to redressing the lack of skills among disadvantaged groups and communities.

The following figure is based on the interview sample, as the database could not provide this information. The interview sample, however, was constructed so as to cover all regions, urban and rural spread, and deliberately sought out students who did not complete the course. Four of those who fall under the coloured group were Khwe speakers, one of whom did not complete the course.

Success on the course does not seem to have been influenced by any one factor, but the support provided by the study groups seems to have played a significant part.

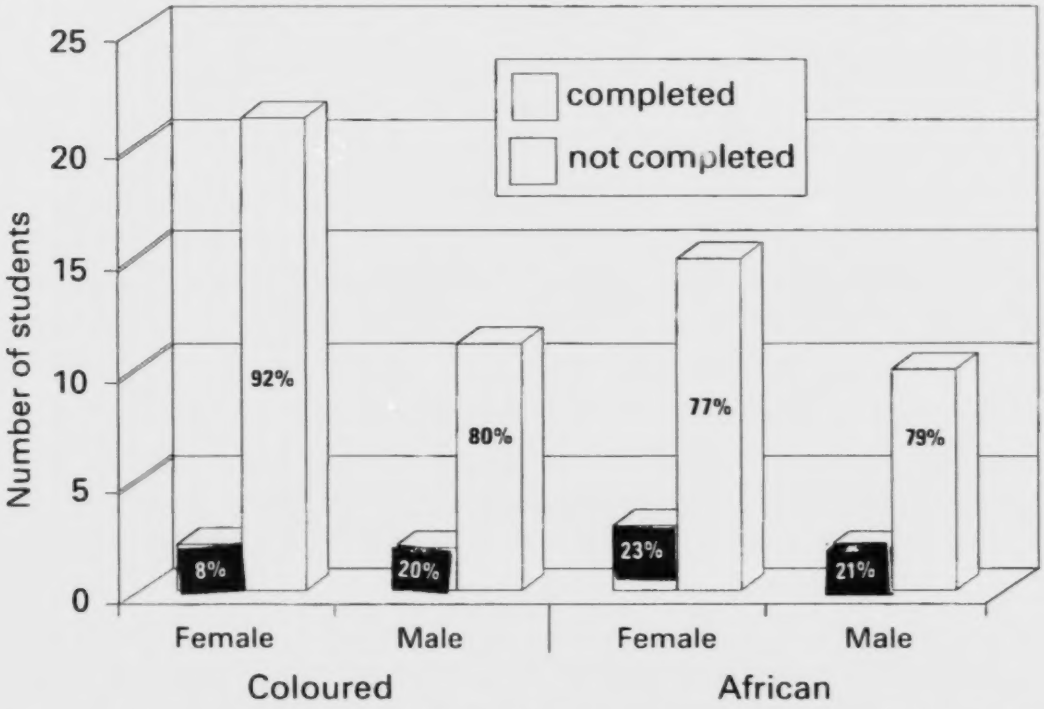

Figure 3.8 Overall completion rate by race and gender (sample only)

It is hard to talk about the personal impact of the CACE courses in a province characterised by an extreme paucity of educational opportunities. Under such circumstances, any educational experience is sure to have a lasting effect on people's memories. Being able to study at all is a rare privilege, particularly in the rural areas of the Northern Cape. In Carnarvon, for example, a small isolated town, only five 1999 matriculants went on to any form of further education (interview with community member, 12/12/00).

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Nevertheless, these courses seem to have had an impact that would not necessarily have been achieved by 'just any course'. The Certificate in particular drew its students from a wide spectrum of small, rural communities and these students almost without exception talk of the powerful impact the course has had on their self-concept, their tolerance of other people and cultures, their ability to act confidently and independently. Many show the sense of social responsibility that CACE sought consciously to build, especially in younger students who had not had the same political experiences as their older colleagues (interview with CACE lecturer, 28/01/01). Chapter 5 documents some of the ways in which students have acted on their newly acquired understandings and skills.

A summary of the findings in relation to the research questions for the Certificate is at the end of Chapter 5. What follows is a discussion of the findings in relation to the impact of the Certificate on students in their personal lives.

8.1 Educational impact

The Certificate seems to have been exceptional in its ability to transform the beliefs, attitudes and knowledge of a very diverse group of students. Such transformative learning is crucial in distance learning since many distance learners are adults with established belief systems returning to the process of learning (Guan and Idrus 1997:26). It is clear that the values reflected in the methodology for the course played a large part in this. Shor (1993: 33–4) lists an agenda of values for critical pedagogy that accurately describes the Certificate course: participatory, situated, critical, democratic, dialogic, desocialisation[4], multicultural, research-oriented, activist and affective.

While the impact is not equally profound on all students, there is evidence that every one of these features played a part in changing the ideas or practices of some student at some time. Why students did not always manage to transfer these values into their own practices in public adult learning centres is explored in Chapter 4.

The course has been successful in developing students' identities as learners in tertiary study and creating a foundation for further learning. Students who managed to move from the Certificate to the Advanced Diploma, a jump of three NQF levels, are ample proof of this.

Students have also been reinforced in or begun to develop identities as agents of social change – this will be more fully discussed in Chapter 6.

8.2 Economic impact

Forty-seven percent (29) of respondents recorded an increase in income: 43% (15) of women and 52% (14) of men. The course has therefore had an impact on the patterns of income, especially in rural areas.

The most stable group were urban women, and the group that experienced the most positive change (temporary to permanent or unemployed to temporary/permanent) were urban men (but the numbers are small); the trend among rural men and women is towards less secure temporary jobs. However, more women found jobs than lost them and more men lost jobs than found them which seems to indicate that women are experiencing increasing equity in employment.

Among Certificate respondents, greater increases of income were recorded amongst speakers of Setswana and isiXhosa (48% and 57% respectively) than among Afrikaans speakers (30%). This could be attributed to larger numbers of Afrikaans speakers already holding steady jobs, in line with the demographics of the province as well as the distribution of jobs under the previous regime. As 62% of those who recorded a change in income were working in the ABET system, it also indicates a growing number of African students employed in PALCs along with the increase in provision in poorer communities. This therefore contributes to redress by increasing opportunities for previously marginalised groups.

The unemployment rate for Certificate students is 21%, lower than the national average of 33,9% and the provincial average of 28,5% (Statistics South Africa 2000). However, overall on the

questionnaire sample the majority of students cluster in the category who came on to the course in temporary jobs and still hold temporary jobs today, (30%). Of these 55% are women. Altogether 47% of students are in temporary jobs. This indicates that the employment context for students is characterised by insecurity, low pay and high mobility.

What were the differences in impact between the 1997 and 1999 deliveries of the programme (research question 6)

The response rate to the questionnaires for the 1996–7 cycle was 24,6%, while that for the second cycle was 31%, which is above average and probably indicates that the second cycle had more impact on students' personal and professional lives than the first.

Three times as many students are employed as facilitators by the ABET Unit from the second cycle than from the first cycle. Some reasons for the low numbers from the first cycle employed in ABET are discussed in Chapter 4 (section 2.2) but this is a continuing source of unhappiness.

Other differences are:

- In the 1998–9 cycle, a much wider spread of students is employed in other sectors and especially in local government. This was partly due to the recruitment strategy used by CACE but also perhaps to increasing opportunities at local level.
- Many more from the second cycle are also involved on a voluntary basis assisting with business plans for local government and other community initiatives. It would seem that the inclusion of a Small Business skills component in the second cycle has had wide-ranging consequences.

What have been the unintended consequences of the courses? (research question 9)

One student has called her daughter 'Caceline'.

Other research questions are discussed in relation to the Certificate in Chapters 4 and 5.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 Curriculum

Few if any changes are needed to the curriculum overall – it is strongly appropriate for the purposes of most students. The combination of the four modules, ***Facilitating Adult Learning, Contextual Studies, Organising Skills*** and ***Research Skills***, seems to have been a powerful catalyst in equipping students to initiate or participate in development projects.

The organisation of the curriculum could be reconsidered in order to reduce the overload on students, for example, combining the Participatory Rural Appraisal section from the ***ABET for Development*** module with the ***Research Skills*** module and using this as the starting-point for the ABET module.

Issues relating to the Literacy section of the ***ABET for Development*** module and the ***Training Small Business Developers*** module are discussed in detail in Chapter 4. However, more attention could be paid to designing learning programmes and developing a basic understanding of unit standards.

9.2 Model of delivery

The model of delivery should be retained in its present highly successful form. As more adult education graduates become available, the pool of appropriate tutors should grow. Extra staff would decrease the extremely heavy load on lecturers and speed up the rate of feedback to students.

9.3 Communications and participation (Department of Education)

It is important to ensure that employees of the Department of Education, especially those in the public adult learning centres, understand the selection processes and procedures as well as the way in which the salary notches are calculated. The Department of Education could send out pamphlets or hold information sessions to ensure clarity. Processes to encourage community participation in the selection of educators need to be put in place.

9.4 Administrative issues (CACE)

Administration by CACE could be improved by:

- ensuring that students' queries receive prompt responses: some students complain that letters are not answered and phone calls not returned. This is especially important where financial issues are concerned as these often have social and professional consequences for students;
- finding a database consultant who will come when requested; and
- setting up the database so that future impact or tracer studies can be carried out with less difficulty, for example, by entering information consistently and making database formats the same for all courses.

4 CACE STUDENTS IN ABET

'In the classroom set-up, and in the community, I think CACE helped me a lot, because I learnt to think creatively, to plan something or to ask the kind of questions to draw people out and encourage them to speak ... so the Certificate meant a lot to me. It was an eye-opener and it developed me as a community worker.'

(translated from Afrikaans) (male Certificate student, rural)

Summary

This chapter describes the impact of the CACE Certificate course on students working in formal ABET provision, either in the Department of Education or in other sectors. It describes some of the practices of students working as Cluster Programme Managers (CPMs) or as facilitators in ABET classes. It focuses particularly on Level 1 – initial literacy – and on small business development. These areas were covered in the Certificate as part of the ABET for Development module, with Small Business being introduced in the second cycle. On the whole the impact of CACE students within the Department of Education has been disappointing. In order to enable facilitators to meet the national goals for ABET, the common ground between the ABET Unit's vision, policies and practices and CACE's vision, principles and approaches should be increased.

See Chapter 2 for a description of Advanced Diploma students now in the higher levels of the ABET system and in ABET management positions in other sectors.

Impacts of CACE students on ABET learners:

- increased access: CPMs have established new centres and facilitators have recruited more learners;
- some more efficient and better organised learning centres;
- more creative and motivating facilitation of learning groups;
- greater access to information and services such as health, pensions, legal rights; and
- greater participation in community structures, especially by women.

Aspects that merit further consideration in the light of this study:

- introducing contracts for facilitators and Cluster Programme Managers that provide stability and encourage professional development;

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- investigating the forms of literacy provision that are most appropriate for the Northern Cape context;
- finding ways of enhancing facilitators' ability to use critical literacy pedagogies as well as other features of education for social change;
- strengthening students' understanding of how to teach reading and writing skills which are transferable across a range of text and contexts;
- providing pedagogical support by Cluster Programme Managers to facilitators 'on the ground';
- using the *Small Business Skills* module, currently taught at ABET Level 4, at other levels and in community contexts; and
- including organising skills and contextual understanding in the unit standards for ABET educators.

1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the impact of the Certificate course on students working in the ABET system as Cluster Programme Managers and facilitators in adult centres, but also in other sectors such as Correctional Services. Section 2 describes the research findings. Section 3 discusses some of the issues arising from these findings, particularly the difference between students' ability to apply what they learnt in community-based contexts (see Chapter 5) and in the more formal environment of the public adult learning centres. Despite the approach taken in the CACE training materials, the content of ABET classes was rarely directly linked to learners' needs outside the classroom and even more rarely to development processes in the community. This section explores some of the reasons for this lack of transfer within the context of the transformation of ABET in the Northern Cape. The final section discusses some of the implications of the findings for the provision of ABET in adult learning centres in the Northern Cape, for CACE's training and for national unit standards for ABET practitioners.

The information in this section of the research is taken from responses to questionnaires and from semi-structured interviews. In each case, 36% of the sample were people working within the ABET system. In addition, 12 lesson observations were carried out at different ABET levels and two interviews conducted with ABET facilitators who had not been trained by CACE. Wherever possible information was checked by interviewing others who knew or worked with informants, community leaders, managers, core training team members, ABET Unit staff and learners, and by examining relevant documents.

2. IMPACTS OF THE CERTIFICATE COURSE

2.1 Context: lack of recognition and nine-month contract

The two issues that come up most often in a computer-assisted count of codes generated by 44 interviews at all levels of the system are lack of recognition and the nine-month contract for educators. The latter is the greatest barrier that facilitators face in attempting to sustain themselves as professional ABET workers.

All facilitators are employed on a nine-month contract with no automatic renewal; they have to reapply for their jobs every year and often do not get reappointed. This system has affected facilitators badly: almost every informant had some comment on it and the hardship it causes. The three months without pay means considerable suffering and an inability to plan or build a future in any way. Facilitators cannot buy houses, take out HP agreements, arrange childcare or get loans; things that teachers in the formal sector take for granted. They also feel that it is not worth starting anything new or being creative, as they do not know if they will be there the next year to carry it through. Cluster Programme Managers, who are responsible for managing and monitoring a group of learning centres and are employed on full-time contracts, also have to re-apply for their posts every year. This means that facilitators and Cluster Programme Managers, even though highly committed to ABET and skilled in their jobs, are constantly on the look out for permanent jobs, which in turn means a loss of capacity to ABET.

The nine-month contract policy has negative impacts on the ABET system as a whole: Re-advertising and rehiring ABET facilitators every year is costly in terms of time, money, human resources, and human relations. As a result of the policy, the system itself is characterised by high mobility and instability: for example, amongst the CACE students who returned questionnaires and who had at some time worked as facilitators, 31% had moved out of the ABET system, 33% had moved into the ABET system, and 35% had stayed in the system.

Even if, as the ABET Unit argues (interview, 31/10/00), there are always unemployed people to take the places of those who leave, it means that ABET learners are constantly disadvantaged by having new and usually inexperienced and/or unqualified facilitators. Adult beginner learners are particularly vulnerable to frequent changes of educator because of the need to build confidence and a secure learning environment where people feel able to take risks. This emerged unsolicited in discussions with learners, where they spoke of the difficulty of getting used to a new facilitator after the slow process of getting used to the 'maniere' (ways) of the previous one. Some learners leave because of this, one describing her flight with a swift arm movement: 'toe het ek weggehol' [then I just ran away] (female learner, mid-40's, rural).

It is worth noting that from 2001 the Western Cape is implementing full one-year contracts (January–December) with basic benefits, where the facilitators will work a 40-hour week, which includes preparation and administration time. They plan to upgrade to permanent positions by 2003 (Anelia Coetzee, Chief Planner, Western Cape Education Department, ABET Sub-directorate, telephone interview, 24 November 2000).

2.2 Number and roles of past students in the ABET system

Of the questionnaires returned, 43% (35) were active in formal ABET provision in some way. The breakdown per sector is as follows:

- ABET system (Department of Education): 29 (including 1 volunteer);
- Correctional Services: 4 (2 inmates[1], 2 employees); and
- NGO: 2.

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CACE Certificate students are employed at two levels in the ABET system, as Cluster Programme Managers and as facilitators in public adult learning centres (PALCs). See Appendix 7: ***Structure of ABET Unit (Northern Cape)***.

The pattern for employment of Certificate students as facilitators in public adult learning centres is as follows:

1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
no figures available	no figures available	46	55	37

Table 4.1 Certificate students employed in public adult learning centres[2]

Only 17% of the facilitators employed by the ABET Unit in 2000 were CACE students. This represents 25% of Certificate graduates over the two cycles and seems surprisingly low. Discussions at the symposium held in Kimberley in February 2001, as well as in interviews with CACE and ABET Unit staff, revealed several possible reasons for this figure:

- Job insecurity and low pay, as discussed in section 2.1, which means that people move out of the system.
- Jobs in public adult learning centres (PALCs) are determined by the needs of the learners, for example, the languages spoken in a particular community will determine the choice of educator for ABET Level 1. CACE students may not fit the language profile needed.
- Not all CACE students can teach at all levels of the system.
- Some students may not have performed well and therefore did not have their contracts renewed.
- A percentage of students would not have sought employment in the Department of Education, as their motivation was to improve their skills in other contexts such as Health, Social Services, or community work generally. (It is not possible to get accurate information on students' reasons for doing the course, as this was not recorded on registration. Conclusions can only be drawn based on their employment at the time. However, it is significant that in the first cycle, 57% of students on the course were unemployed and would therefore have hoped to gain employment through the course. This is the group that has most consistently expressed disappointment that they have not been employed by the Department. Four years later in 2000, only seven students from this cycle were employed by the ABET Unit as opposed to 30 from the second cycle.)

The vexed question of why so few students from the first cycle are employed in ABET continues to haunt students and Unit officials. There is a perception on the part of many CACE students in the De Aar and Upington regions that there is bias against CACE students in these regions and that the selection process is flawed. De Aar shows the lowest percentage of CACE students employed as facilitators (11%) yet Upington has the highest (22%), so no clear-cut pattern emerges.

Two people who formed part of the ABET Unit in 1996 felt that the ABET Unit should have been much clearer about the fact that while they were offering an opportunity to study, they could not guarantee a job at the end of the course (in much the same way that teacher training colleges do not guarantee jobs to their students).

While there may well have been flaws in the selection process, it seems that the group of students from the first cycle was particularly badly affected by the shifting policy environment of 1997 and 1998: the lack of clarity over recognition of CACE course and the pressure to redeploy

school teachers into adult centres effectively excluded many from jobs. At the end of 1997 many students who had been working in PALCs were replaced by people with teaching qualifications and no ABET experience, presumably as part of the teacher redeployment strategy. This naturally caused great resentment as CACE students feel that they are better qualified to teach adults and that the Department placed no value on their qualification at that time. CACE staff also feel that in the early years the need for a qualification for adult education was not shared by all levels of staff in the ABET system. Perhaps finding a way to admit this group into the Diploma programme in 2002 or alternatively offering them the ***Training Small Business Developers*** module which was not included in the first cycle would be a way out of this continuing unhappiness: it would upgrade their skills and open opportunities for them to enter the system or to act more creatively outside it.

2.3 Learners

While learners are often negatively affected by the nine-month contract system outlined above, some positive impacts of the CACE Certificate course on learners can be seen in the following:

- Learners have increased access to learning centres; for example, one Cluster Programme Manager has increased the number of centres in his area from four to ten as well as the number of learners attending to 250.
- Learners benefit from improved facilitation skills of the facilitators, improved planning of learning experiences and creative use of resources.
- More democratic relationships have developed between facilitators and learners, leading to sharing and discussing of ideas and building confidence.
- Some learners gain the confidence to participate in community structures; most of the evidence in this regard relates to women. (The following extract is the exception rather than the rule but indicates what can be achieved by ABET facilitators with vision and skills.)

  'One of my learners is a secretary in Cape Town after passing Level 3 in 1999, other one is running a project of trees at Bucklands after passing Level 2 in 1999; other one is a chairperson of the Good Motivation Project i.e. needlework; the other one is a Vice-Secretary of the School Governing Body after passing Level 3 in 1999. The others can now run/lead the community meetings and write minutes, the others, three of them, have been elected at the community hall to work with the Department Of Welfare (two of them are in Level 2 and one in Level 1); other one is a councillor.'

  (female student, Kimberley region, rural)

- Learners gain greater access to information and services through the 'community worker' role taken on by many facilitators. One of the CACE facilitators won the Educator of the Year Award in 2000:

  'This person has a real sense of what development work is about because ... she would look at the issues that these people are faced with, you know, and she would, for instance, confront Home Affairs about not issuing IDs to people. A whole lot of things, you know. That's the kind of things that she would do, which is not at present part and parcel of the curriculum. ... The people have problems with grants and so on, welfare issues, this is quite a big welfare province. And people would come to her with those kind of issues and she would get involved in those issues and she would go to community meetings and confront the civic organisations in terms of, you know, what they are doing for development and so, and empowering her learners, obviously, to interact at that level. So one of the main reasons why we felt that this woman ... It's like going beyond the call of duty, which is not in the job description at this point in time.'

  (member of ABET Council and past ABET Unit member, 19/09/00)

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In our discussions with learners, many list functional ways in which literacy skills have helped them, for example, at banks and shops and in reading pamphlets announcing community meetings. Others, however, say that except for two learners who became Cluster Programme Managers they do not see people in ABET centres 'coming out successful', that is, getting jobs and earning an income. In discussions on why people drop out of ABET classes, learners stressed among other things that people need to feel that they 'belong' to a centre and suggested various ways of making it a place learners are proud to be associated with, such as painting the walls, or holding community events. One group suggested introducing uniforms; while this was initially surprising, the sentiment behind it is noteworthy. Something as simple as a T-shirt could enable learners to feel a part of something that is valuable (CACE staff member, 25/01/01).

Other issues to do with ABET provision and the curriculum in place at PALCs are discussed in section 3 of this chapter.

2.4 Work practices

2.4.1 Cluster Programme Managers

In 1999 there were eight CACE students employed as Cluster Programme Managers out of a total of 24. Of these, one student who did not finish the Certificate is nevertheless employed as a Cluster Programme Manager because of the skills she has from CACE (researcher, Stakeholders Symposium, 13/02/01). Another Cluster Programme Manager is a student of the ABET system herself.

A Cluster Programme Manager in the De Aar region stated that:

> *'as someone who is a manager, **Organising Skills** is very useful to me. Sometimes I encounter problems or frictions then I applied the skills and the knowledge I acquired from CACE ... [as a result] people are now confident in me. In centres we have centre governing bodies it's then I run meetings effectively. Also I help my educators a lot with CACE knowledge ... I also preach ABET especially in my congregation as a result there's an improvement. People are very interested. Also people want to join or register with CACE.'*
>
> (26/11/00)

A Cluster Programme Manager in a rural area near Kimberley stated:

> *'The strength was you have to organise yourself so previously you are just living haphazardly, not being able to organise yourself. As I'm saying now I have to organise myself ... If I am not organised how would the centres be organised? If I don't have a good management I won't be able to manage centres. So like now I'm having 10 centres – how would I be able to manage 10 centres if myself I'm not a good manager? The qualities of leadership – the ones I received from CACE help me a lot in being a good leader. Not being a boss but being a leader. Those are the strengths I can mention.'*
>
> (01/12/00)

Other CPMs mention the following skills they gained from CACE: monitoring and evaluation, understanding of learners' needs and ability to motivate them to attend classes, and research skills to find out why learners don't attend. One said that the small business module helped her when small, medium and micro-enterprise skills (SMME) were introduced at pilot centres.

Stakeholders' perceptions and comments

Cluster Programme Managers' perceptions of their own skills were confirmed by a senior official in the ABET Unit:

> *'We were reluctant at first to take CPMs from CACE but we decided to throw them in the deep sea and see what they can do ... It is amazing, they are the best in the province, even nationally. Even before you tell them how you want to do something, they have the same idea ... They take your ideas and are able to run.*
>
> (Stakeholders' Symposium, 13/02/01)

The effectiveness of CACE students as Cluster Programme Managers has surprised Department of Education officials outside the ABET Unit, who ask what the Unit did to 'get these people working'. ABET Unit officials also mentioned a CPM in the Springbok region who had to take over as Regional Coordinator for a while and performed extremely well.

To conclude, CACE courses seem to have had the following impacts on those working as Cluster Programme Managers:

- increased independence and self-sufficiency;
- more efficient organising and managing of themselves and their activities;
- improved communication and problem-solving skills;
- improved planning and monitoring skills;
- improved ability to work with and motivate others as leader or team member; and
- greater understanding of learners' needs and ability to motivate them to attend classes.

These indicators reflect several of the critical cross-field outcomes defined by SAQA (see Appendix 6).

2.4.2 Facilitators in adult learning centres

Facilitators frequently mention the Certificate course, and the ***Facilitating Adult Learning*** module in particular, as having helped them in their work in the following ways: providing an understanding of learners as adults with knowledge and experience of their own, developing their creative thinking skills, ways of building confidence and encouraging learners to speak.

One facilitator in a rural area describes how her style shifted from drill work and rote learning:

> *'before the CACE courses the style is different because before you had to do the drill work. The learners should go to the board and do this or repeat what I have taught. But now we are sitting down and even I have got a way to solve the conflict ... By grouping them when I am teaching them so that they can talk, they can work together. Each and everyone who has a problem can help each other.'*
>
> (26/11/00)

Another states: 'You have to be involved. You have to be part and parcel with the learners. You have to be approachable and flexible' (female student, rural, 26/11/00).

Stakeholders perceptions and comments

The regional coordinator of the De Aar region reports that people with adult education training 'are more successful in attracting learners, better facilitators, have patience, better styles or modes of teaching, and make adult learners feel happy in centres' (29/01/01).

The official in charge of practitioner development feels that CACE students grasp new concepts such as OBE 'better than the others' and that 'their implementation of it in the class is making our lives much easier' (20/11/00). A Cluster Programme Manager who is not a CACE student commented that those CACE students she worked with had the following qualities:

> *'The first thing they are creative in their learning areas to attract the interest of the learners or to keep the learners in the classroom. And they've got also styles of motivating learners to be in the centre all the time than those who are not from CACE because they [other facilitators] just taught what they see from the books. They [CACE students] don't use the books all the time. Usually they use the resources like the real life which makes the learners to see where are they going.'*
>
> (03/12/00)

She adds that they participate confidently in workshops and that they 'plan their meetings with learners'. As a result she tends to choose these facilitators to go to workshops.

A researcher who observed a CACE Certificate student, with no other teaching qualification, working as a Grade 1 teacher commented on her confidence, careful planning, competent administration, and ability to develop literacy skills.

However, others feel that the Certificate did not equip students with sufficient 'hard skills' to perform in the classroom (tutor, Springbok region, 18/04/01).

One Cluster Programme Manager in a rural area, when asked to comment on the weaknesses of the course, picked up on the tension between the generic nature of the Certificate as a course for adult educators and the specific needs of facilitators working in public adult learning centres:

> *'The weaknesses are not so much weakness as in a sense the course itself was not relevant to ABET. So when you get there you have that idea that it is relevant to ABET. But it's more to projects than ABET.'*
>
> (01/12/00)

All other students who mentioned weaknesses in the course had comments related to the recognition of the course and their temporary contract employments (see 2.1 in this chapter).

Issues emerging from interviews and observations

Interviews and observations show clear evidence of better planning and greater creativity in students' approach to their teaching (for example, use of mindmaps and resources from outside the class room), and that facilitators are mostly 'facilitating', that is, 'enabling people to learn together, guiding learners, but not telling or dominating, respecting the knowledge and experience of the learners' (CACE overhead transparency from study weekend, 1998).

Despite these positive findings, however, only one student interviewed referred to a change in his ideas about how to teach literacy as a result of the course. No student specifically mentioned 'whole language' or 'REFLECT', the methodologies for literacy that had been taught in the first and second cycles of the Certificate. This lack of transfer of CACE skills and knowledge was noticed early in the research process and became an issue for continuing exploration.

Altogether 12 observations were carried out by the team of researchers, including of one ABET Level 1 class given by a teacher who had not done a CACE course, in order to compare approaches to literacy teaching and facilitation. It is important to note that observations were carried out from September to November, the first set just before the spring break, and later observations at a time when classes were drawing to a close and learners were preparing for exams. If classes had been observed at a different time of year (for example, at the beginning of the year when learners' and

facilitators' motivation and interest were high or in the middle of the year as learning groups were settling into a routine) the findings may have been very different.

Several of the observations and interviews of the facilitators concerned took place under conditions where both learners and facilitators were absent or eager to be gone:

- During November, in one site, mass meetings around the local elections planned for early December were given as the reason why many learners did not come to their classes.
- In one site, classes had actually closed the day before for the spring holiday, and the facilitators reconvened the learners especially for the researcher's visit. In addition, there was a funeral on the same day and everybody was restless and distracted.
- In another site, facilitators were leaving for the CACE graduation ceremony the next day, so that only one facilitator was interviewed. Here, too the ABET group that normally met during the day had been discontinued because the number of learners had dropped below the required number, but was reconvened so the researcher could see the CACE student in action.

Three of the early observations therefore took place under fairly artificial circumstances, and two of these seemed more like 'performances' in the sense that the facilitators intended to show the researcher what their learners could do. Later observations were arranged at short notice and lesson content was obviously part of the normal stream of learning experiences.

The next section describes some of these classroom observations.

ABET Level 1

Snapshot 1

The lesson plan drawn up by the facilitator for this class was as follows[3]:

Lesson Plan

Facilitator _____{name}

BLC

We will correct our last work marking corrections then introduce a new lesson. All learners participating.

LC

Today we are going to revised our alphabetical numbers. Everybody must go and write in chalkboard.
Method: I will write the capital numbers then they will write small letters. Individual work.

ALC

All learners must give me info for this is difficult of what is so we will try again tomorrow. Then we will do numeracy.

In this Level 1 group there are 22 elderly women, all well over 50 years old, and two men, one about 65 years old, the other about 40. At the start of the observation the learners are quietly doing sums written on the board e.g. 11 + 5, 16 + 8. The facilitator is seated at the back, filling in the register. The facilitator explains that this is in fact the last lesson (1 November). Learners will revise their capital and small letters. Learners are asked to go up to the board one by one and write the correct small letter next to the capital letter. A learner wearing a black woollen cap and a T-shirt with the motto

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'Respect our Elders, Build a Caring Society' does a small dance step as she correctly fills in the small 'i' next to the capital 'I' on the board. Apart from this, the room is still and silent as learners walk up to the board one by one and fill in the small letters. Learners do, however, offer advice when others are uncertain. There is very little hesitation; learners clearly know their alphabet well.

(ABET Level 1 class, November 2000)

Snapshot 2

In another Level 1 class there are eight adult learners, one male teenager, and a young boy of ten. Four of the eight learners are men, over 40 years old.

The following sentences are written on the board.

> *Pulane o tsena sekolo sa bagolo.* (Pulane is attending adult school.)
> *Mpho o íthutla go loga* (Mpho has finished knitting.)
> *Mme o apaya nama* (Mother is cooking meat.)
> *Dígo dí budule.* (Food is ready.)
> *Mosídí o apeíle bogobe* (Mosidi baked bread.)

The learners put syllable cards together to make up a word and then match the word to one of the words in the sentences on the board. They say the word aloud when they have done this and paste the card on to the board next to the sentence. All learners except one do this with ease.

(ABET Level 1 class, November 2000)

Snapshot 3

Two ABET Level 1 facilitators used the following text (translated here from Afrikaans) in different ways; the second taught after the first and found the text on the board.

> *Anna has a shop.*
> *She sells paraffin, mieliemeel and sweets. When her husband, Don, left her three years ago, she had no work and very little money.*
> *She borrowed money from her mother to start a shop on the corner.*

The first facilitator begins the class by revising number sequences. Then she writes up twelve words on the board and encourages learners to make sentences with them. Learners are encouraged to work in pairs or groups. Finally she writes up the text as above, reads it aloud and then assists learners to read through it, circling words that are new. The text has no relationship to the words in the previous exercise. When learners make mistakes, she is encouraging. One learner reads something religious to herself word-by-word for most of the class. There is some discussion of why it is important to learn to read words like 'mieliemeel' so that you do not buy the wrong thing when shopping.

(ABET Level 1 class, September 2000)

Snapshot 4

The second facilitator, finding the text from the previous group's lesson on the board, uses it to give his learners reading practice. He does not read it through but encourages learners to work out the words by sounding them out. Learners try to guess the meaning of the text by recognising some of the words and predicting others; but the facilitator asks them to take it word by word. When they have been through

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the whole text, he asks comprehension questions which encourage learners to look beyond the text, for example, 'Why did her husband leave her?'. He also discusses with learners what they would do in Anna's position and talks a little about business plans. Then he asks learners to copy the text.

(ABET Level 1 class, September 2000)

Comment

In all the 'snapshots' above, except perhaps the first, most learners in the groups had developed literacy skills and were able to read sentences and sometimes paragraphs with a fair degree of understanding. Facilitation skills ranged from really excellent with good questioning skills, good use of groups and a supportive environment, to poor; the latter a student who had not completed the course.

Facilitators interviewed before or after these observations showed a clear understanding of learners' literacy needs outside the classroom, describing a number of ways in which they help learners access information, rights and services, for example, applying for ID numbers and children's birth certificates in order to get child support grants or pensions, and understanding funeral policies. These facilitators also get involved in issues such as family violence, labour problems or health problems (group interview, De Aar region).

Facilitators in other research sites around the province were asked what kinds of issues learners discussed in class and whether they used these issues as learning content in the class. All listed a range of community issues that learners discussed but only two described in detail how they would use the issue as learning content; these both taught at the higher levels of ABET. Level 1 facilitators said they would write up a word from the discussion and use that word but were not able to explain how they would take the process further. One facilitator interviewed did not remember the 'REFLECT' methodology which was taught as part of the 1999 ABET for Development module at all; when prompted she said she did use posters in her groups and wrote up words from the discussion. Again she did not have experience of taking this process further.

Other facilitators interviewed described the REFLECT method well but felt it was not suitable for use in the adult learning centres. They talked about an income-generating project they were planning to set up with unemployed women and said that they would use the method in that context.

Facilitators showed a range of different approaches to developing literacy skills. In two of the classes facilitators used a text that had potential as a 'code', one of them attempted to use it in this way but without pushing discussion further, into a real exploration of issues. All except one facilitator made extensive use of phonics in helping learners to make sense of what was written on the board. One facilitator tried to link what learners were reading to real life contexts and encouraged some analytical thinking.

While aspects of each lesson were sound, none showed evidence of a plan that linked all elements together in a coherent sequence of linked tasks. Sentences in one of the lessons described above (and in two others observed but not described) were decontextualised and bore no relation to anything learners would actually want or need to read. Yet learners in the groups have learnt to read.

Dropout rates during the year were consistent with those recorded in nearly all centres, ranging from 30% to 50%, sometimes higher. While learners and facilitators list a host of contextual factors causing learners to drop out, one learner said that she got a 'pain in her head from all the *klanke*' (sounds) and stopped coming. As most groups seem to spend the first few months working entirely on sound and letter formation, it is possible that more than one learner leaves for this reason. A facilitator said that she knows learners are bored and often leave after they know how to write their names.

A list of results supplied by the Department of Education for 1998 and 2000 indicate that pass rates in one centre, where a cluster of CACE students are working, are considerably higher than average. However, a more extensive study would be needed to establish whether this pattern is

consistent for all CACE students. De Aar, for example, has the smallest number of CACE students employed but has the highest average efficiency rate (i.e. percentage of learners who graduate from the programme in the same year that they registered).

Statistics for numbers of learners who repeat the year are not available and only a small number of those registered actually write the exam, the average in the region being 55,1% (statistics provided by the ABET Unit, 2000). The pass rate from a brief analysis of sample centres also seems to be around 55%. This means that roughly 27% of those who register graduate from the year. Agneta Lind and Anton Johnston of SIDA point out that this is not a bad figure, given that the average efficiency rate for the 11 countries researched in the Economic World Literacy Project (EWLP) in the 1980s was only 12% (personal communication, 23/03/01). Nevertheless, the highest efficiency rate in that project was Tanzania, at 50%, and South Africa has 20 years of local and international experience to draw on, so perhaps higher throughput rates could be expected.

ABET Level 2

The Xhosa mother-tongue class observed was run along traditional lines with learners reading out loud in turn. All except one learner could read without difficulty. In the bilingual English/Setswana class observed, the facilitator was energetic and lively and did her best to involve learners actively. The task involved matching English words to pictures of parts of the body and making sentences. Then learners were asked to stand and act out, the rhyme: 'Heads and shoulders, knees and toes.'

Comment

The Xhosa lesson was probably a performance designed to demonstrate to the researcher that learners had learnt to read. The facilitator had ample warning of the researcher's visit. The lesson would no doubt have been different under everyday conditions. The second visit however was arranged at short notice and the facilitator of this English/Setswana class was clearly continuing work done previously. This lesson showed the same pattern as evident in the Level 1 classes: the facilitator tried hard to implement active participatory methods but did not have enough experience to combine these with appropriate content or tasks. There was, for example, no discussion of the contexts in which learners might need to use the language they were learning. The learning materials used seemed to be based on grammatical rather than communicative approaches to language learning.

Small business skills (ABET Level 4)

Two Level 4 classes were observed: one used group work effectively and learners participated well. They were all considerably younger than learners in other levels, many returning after teenage pregnancies. The materials used defined the outcomes for each lesson and set out a clear sequence of tasks. Learners in the second Level 4 small business skills class were preparing for the exam and the lesson consisted largely of a motivating speech by the facilitator.

Comment

There are a number of factors that make the small business skills classes easier and more successful: the learning materials are sound and carefully sequenced, they allow for flexibility depending on learners' interests, key outcomes are set and the skills and knowledge to achieve these outcomes carefully developed. Learners also seem to be more motivated because they can see that the skills will be useful outside the classroom (interview with facilitator, urban region). Ironically, the task of the generally more experienced facilitators at the higher levels of the ABET system is easier than that of less experienced facilitators at the lower levels, who have to determine their own outcomes, plan their own lessons, and decide on their own assessment tasks.

Facilitators in Correctional Services

The training officer who did the Certificate states that all the modules helped him in his work; in addition he has 'become more exemplary at home; facilitating became one of my daily tasks. I am also serving in different structures in the community. CACE empowered me a lot during 1998–9'. Another employee also reports that he became involved in community initiatives as a result of CACE.

Other past students who are on the staff of the Correctional Services do not seem to be fully utilised and feel that the value of an adult education course is not recognised.

Inmates who completed the course are subject to the decisions of particular prison managements as to whether or not they can teach: at one stage in Upington a prisoner became deeply involved and was very successful. Another in Kimberley was able to teach small business skills to a group of men as part of his CACE project but this kind of initiative was stopped when a new management came in.

Stakeholders' perceptions and comments

The provincial head of education and training in Correctional Services reports that currently they are not using offenders who did the Certificate (interview, 18/01/01). This kind of decision depends on the management of the particular institution. With regard to employees who do the course, he said that Correctional Services has no criteria for selection at this point, generally appointing qualified teachers who then receive a week-long training session on how to become facilitators. This is given by outside providers. About 10% of facilitators have adult education training but more of those currently employed are becoming interested, and Correctional Services is beginning to 'look more to ABET' when making permanent appointments. At the moment ABET classes are 'more mainstream' using conventional schoolbooks. A particular problem, leading to this approach, is youth in prisons who have been cut off from mainstream education.

3. WHY DO FACILITATORS FIND IT DIFFICULT TO APPLY CACE SKILLS?[4]

A significant finding to emerge from this study has been the difference in the ability of past students to apply CACE knowledge and skills when they are in community contexts (see Chapter 5) and when they are facilitating ABET learning groups, especially at Levels 1 and 2.

An assumption underlying this interpretation is that if participatory learning has taken place on the course and students have understood the part of the course that covers teaching mother-tongue literacy, they would be able to apply the principles and methodologies in ABET classrooms. There was very little evidence of the application of these skills, so we examined other issues that emerged from observations, questionnaires and interviews to see if they could throw light on the problem.

The next section summarises the issues that emerge from the study of CACE training in relation to public adult learning centres.

Factors that influence facilitators' ability to apply the REFLECT or whole language methodologies taught by CACE in ABET classes seem to fall into three broad categories:

- the lack of sufficient consultation and information-sharing between the different providers and partners involved in training facilitators;
- the degree to which transfer is promoted by the Certificate course itself; and
- a combination of institutional and contextual factors.

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3.1 Consultation between partners and providers

Both the ABET Unit and CACE feel that more consultation over the content of the course would have been beneficial. However, the priority for the ABET Unit was to improve the systemic aspects of the ABET provision and interviews indicate that most of their energy went into developing and implementing policies, setting up systems, procedures, and so on (see *Hard factors* in section 3.4 in this chapter).

During the first two years of the partnership, the responsibility for training facilitators lay with CACE and other NGO partners. CACE requested input from ABET Unit staff and regional coordinators on curriculum outlines but all except one member of staff were too busy to engage with these (interview with CACE lecturer, 11/09/00). Similarly, although CACE suggested a cooperative working relationship with the NGO contracted to provide basic training for new facilitators, this did not take place (interview with CACE lecturer, 24/10/00). There is often a lack of congruence between the principles and values underlying the two training approaches as outlined below.

3.1.1 The training of literacy facilitators

The literacy training offered by CACE and by other training providers is superficially similar but often seems to value different kinds of skills and to make different assumptions about adult learning and the development of language and literacy skills.

In the 1996–7 cycle the Certificate trained students to use a whole language approach for teaching literacy. This approach begins with information that is meaningful and motivating to the learner, and teaches phonics based on the words and sentences that learners create. The making of meaning by learners takes precedence over phonetic information. Learning groups create their own reading and writing materials, and facilitators are encouraged to integrate literacy lessons with community development activities (Dixon and Tuladhar 1996:31). Such an approach is intended to meet the diverse needs of community literacy groups.

In the 1998–9 cycle of the Certificate, CACE advocated an approach to literacy that is even more closely connected to development. This approach drew on 'REFLECT', which fuses the theory of Paulo Freire and the practice of Participatory Rural Appraisal (Archer and Cottingham 1996:6). Each learning 'circle' produces its own learning materials through creating maps, matrices, calendars and diagrams that represent local reality. The graphics are used to generate discussion and related writing or numeracy work and action to address local problems. Since 1993 the REFLECT approach has been piloted in various projects and contexts around the world, including urban environments, and has proved successful at linking literacy to wider development (Overseas Development Agency paper 1996 cited in Archer and Cottingham 1996:6).

A member of the Core Provincial Training Team, which was trained by another NGO in charge of cascade training for the Department of Education, described a literacy methodology that begins with the alphabet and how to form letters. While learners might discuss codes orally, they 'don't do sentences at that stage'. When asked how she would link discussion to literacy skills in a beginner's class, she said she had 'never thought about that' (telephone interview, 23/02/01). At higher levels, 'codes' such as soapboxes are used but mainly as a way of generating sentences; their transformative potential does not seem to be exploited.

This facilitator nevertheless had a 100% pass rate when teaching ABET classes. She is a trained school teacher but also a CACE Advanced Diploma student. It is clear that in this case the training offered by the NGO in charge of cascade training overrode any learning from the Advanced Diploma modules on ABET, where a range of approaches to literacy were discussed and debated. In the Advanced Diploma and Certificate courses, 'codes' are tools for analysis and for linking literacy to issues that are important to learners. In other training and learning materials to which facilitators are exposed, 'codes' are objects or situations that learners talk about; but although a connection between

these and subsequent literacy work is intended, it gives way to an intensive focus on often unrelated sound and word-building, and neat handwriting. This difference in emphasis seems to reflect a difference in goals for ABET and in conceptualising the purposes of literacy.

3.2 The literacy section in the Certificate *ABET for Development* module

Despite the fact that the majority of students interviewed achieved pass marks on the ***ABET for Development*** module and that active learning principles were followed in developing the workbook, delivering the training and designing practical assignments, only eight informants out of 51 currently or previously employed in ABET mentioned this module as having helped with their teaching. One was in Correctional Services. As discussed earlier, no facilitator ever mentioned the terms 'whole language' or 'REFLECT' or spontaneously described a lesson along the lines suggested by the module.

There was strong evidence that the Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) tool and methodology was understood and used in community contexts (see Chapter 5), but informants generally hesitated when asked how they linked this analysis to actual literacy work in the classroom. No informant provided a fluent coherent account. This contrasts strongly with past CACE students in other contexts such as Social Services (See Chapter 5, section 2.3.2).

Either mechanisms of translating this new approach into practice were not well understood or there were other factors involved. Assignments for this section in the 1998-9 cohort show a lower pass rate than in the previous cohort. This could be attributed to the increased complexity of the module and the time allowed to cover the content. Students may not have had sufficient practice in applying the principles. Of the CACE facilitators working in PALCs in 2000, 26% failed the assignment that called for a needs analysis to be converted into a lesson plan, or failed the module as a whole.

One reason for the lack of application in ABET could thus be insufficient understanding. However, as many students did well on the first assignment (PRA) talk with authority about using it in community contexts for other purposes, the crux of the problem seems to lie more with translating an understanding of community contexts and needs into sound and relevant learning plans.

3.3 Applying the theory of skills transfer

Teaching literacy or other skills to adult learners would seem, at first glance, to be a situation characterised by 'near' transfer, that is, similar in terms of students' own experiences as learners on the CACE course, but may in reality be much more complex. In other 'development-type' or non-formal contexts there are fewer organisational and educational frames (see 3.4 in this chapter) to juggle with, goals and participant needs are easier to define, and tasks are often clearly similar to practical assignments completed during the Certificate.

Perkins and Salomon (1994:6454) define two levels of transfer: 'low road' transfer is automatic and the result of diverse and extensive practice while 'high road' transfer results from 'effortful, mindful abstraction of principles from one context to apply them in another) (Perkins 1992 cited in Perkins and Salomon 1994:6455). Other conditions suggested for transfer are active self-monitoring and arousing mindfulness, in other words, a critical reflective approach to learning. Perkins identifies two broad instructional strategies to foster transfer (Perkins and Salomon 1988 cited in Perkins and Salomon 1994:6456).

- '***Hugging***' exploits reflexive transfer and 'directly engages the learners in approximations to the performances desired': the learning experience 'hugs' the target performance, maximising the later likelihood of automatic low road transfer. There is good evidence of this happening in CACE courses as a whole.

- '***Bridging***' exploits the 'high road' to transfer. It 'encourages the formulation of abstractions, searches for possible connections, mindfulness, and metacognition'. Instruction here emphasises abstract analysis and planning: 'incorporating both the realistic experiential character of low road transfer and the thoughtful analytic character of high road transfer seems most likely to yield rich transfer' (ibid.).

If one accepts Perkins and Salomon as a reasonable account, it is possible to explain the failure of CACE students to apply what they had learnt. While all Certificate modules provide opportunities for both kinds of transfer, it is possible that the rushed nature of the section of the course on developing literacy skills did not allow enough time for extensive practice, that is, 'low road' transfer, nor adequate attention to abstracting the principles of either the 'whole language approach' (1997) or the REFLECT approach (1999) in order for students to apply them flexibly in context.

This lack of learning time was more critical in the modules devoted to literacy methodologies as these modules, almost alone among the contents of the Certificate course, were most likely to conflict with students' prior learning and experience (that is, most students' received notions of what literacy is and how it should be taught). There may be considerable resistance to the idea that literacy arises from context and is embedded in it rather than being something totally separate from lived experience and related to sounds and syllables. This could explain why the principles and strategies successfully applied in community development contexts are muted in ABET classrooms: here an understanding of adult learning, etc. has to be integrated with an inadequate understanding of how to develop reading and writing skills. For inexperienced facilitators, the way to cope is to fall back on prior experience.

If this analysis is correct, more time needs to be spent on the development of literacy skills. It could be argued that this would privilege one section of ABET provision and curriculum over others such as Numeracy or Science and Technology. Yet literacy is qualitatively different from the other components of the ABET curriculum – it underpins all other subjects. A learner with sound reading and writing skills can transfer these to any other subject or context (work-place training, community or income-generating projects, etc.).

The same argument applies to teaching skills. A facilitator who has a thorough understanding of how adults learn to read can help learners decode the essential information in any text in any context. This is a fundamental point which seems to have got lost in the progressive spinning out of outcomes, unit standards, learning areas, curricula, and assessment criteria, since the first formulation of a new vision for ABET in 1994.

It is clear that many students did not understand the methodology sufficiently to be able to implement it with confidence. However, there was also substantiated evidence in some cases that students understood the section on literacy but chose not to apply it (for example, in Upington) and in other cases that students wished to apply it but were not able to, for reasons related to the context of implementation (Carnarvon). So lack of transfer cannot be the only factor at play. We now turn to other factors that the research suggests inhibit the impact of CACE training on facilitators working in PALCs.

3.4 The ABET institutional context

Another insight into the interlocking set of reasons for the puzzling lack of CACE impact on formal ABET provision is provided by Lundgren (1999, cited in Walters and Larsson, 2000:2). Their analysis focuses on how educational processes are 'produced by frame-factors like time-frames, administrative frames'. It can be argued that educational processes are formed by these 'hard' kinds of frames but also by 'soft' frames such as the way teachers 'conceive of their task' and learners' expectations of learning (Larsson 1993 cited in Walters and Larsson 2000:2).

In terms of this argument, the partnership between the ABET Unit and CACE can be illustrated as shown in Figure 4.1 on page 99.

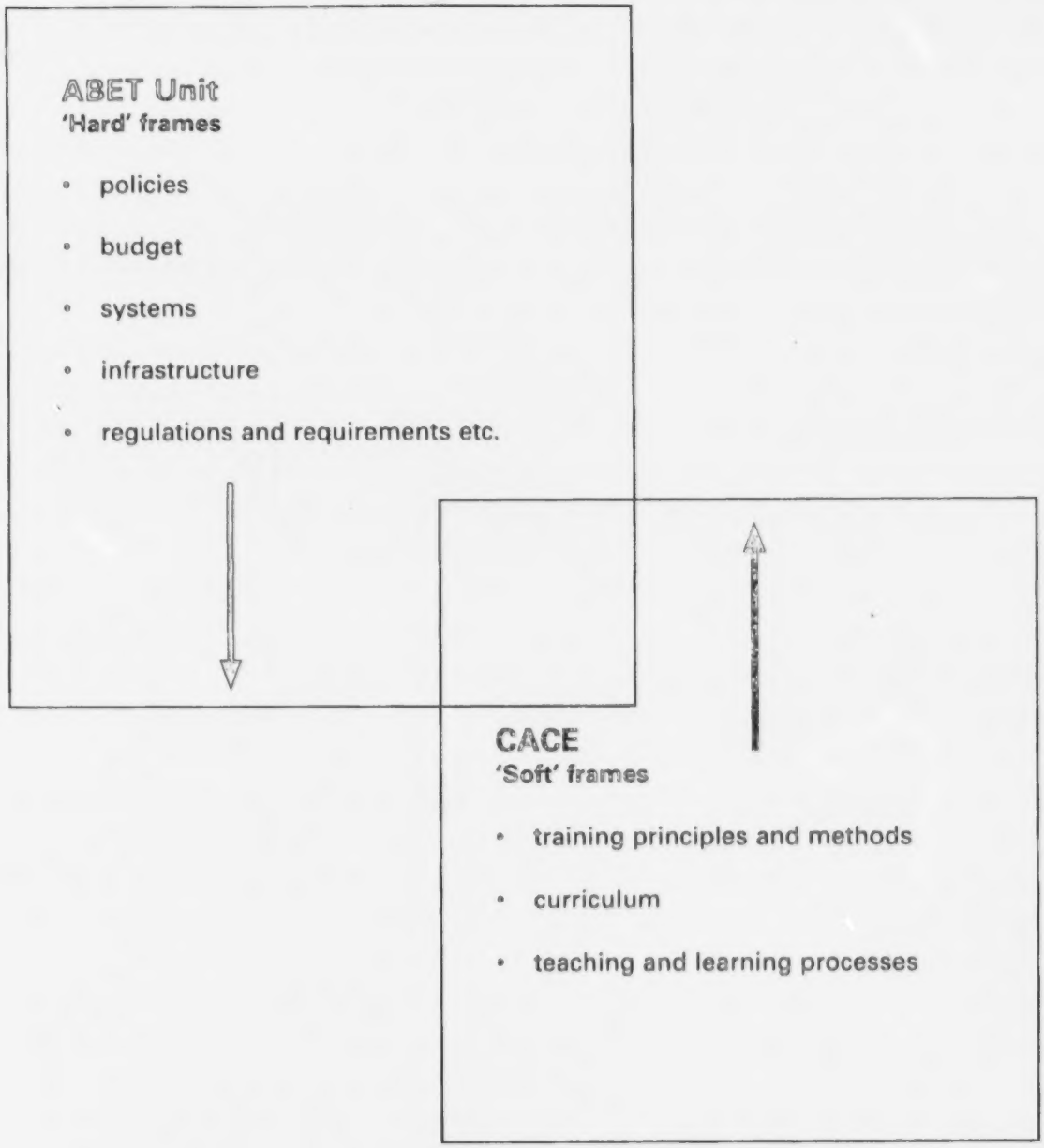

Figure 4.1 Transforming ABET provision in the Northern Cape

Figure 4.1 represents how the partners approached each other from different directions, sharing the same aims but with different priorities. The ABET Unit was primarily concerned with developing the 'hard' systemic aspects of ABET provision in order to improve efficiency, access and accountability to learners. CACE was concerned with building the capacity of facilitators, in other words, with the educational aspects of what happened inside the classroom.

The next section traces some of the factors that limited the success of the partnership in building capacity for ABET and particularly in transforming educational processes in public adult learning centres.

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Hard factors

political factors	The legacy of the integration of separate apartheid education systems means that jostling for power and position has impacted on access to jobs within ABET. The ABET Unit has acknowledged the problem and attempted to address bias in selection procedures by centralising the short-listing procedures for contract staff (CPMs and facilitators). (See also the case studies in Chapter 6.)
recognition	The lack of official national recognition of the Certificate and Advanced Diploma courses for several years led to frustration and unhappiness. The status of ABET as a whole impacts on the ABET Unit as well as its facilitators: ABET staff appear not to be accorded the same respect as other education staff and this causes 'delays and hiccups' in the implementation of strategic objectives (Upington regional report July–September 2000, individual accounts).
budget	There is uncertainty about long-term national support for regional expansion of the ABET system; the regional budget has remained the same from 2000 to 2001, so plans for increased access must be achieved with the same amount of money. This puts even more pressure on facilitators to perform and mobilise or recruit sufficient learners to make the centre viable.
resources	Logistical constraints and weaknesses mean that materials are often not available or centres receive the wrong materials, in the wrong language or the wrong numbers. According to facilitators, the system improves every year but is still a cause of frustration and dropouts.
contracts	The system of a nine-month contract with no automatic renewal has an enormous impact on facilitators and on the system itself. (See 2.1 in this chapter).

selection process

The selection process is open to manipulation if repeated annually, especially as it is currently not based on performance evaluation but only on the job interview. Facilitators who have performed well all year but do not interview well can lose their jobs. Until recently it was not policy to prioritise students with adult education qualifications. This has led to resentment and frustration when students see others with no teaching experience at all – either ABET or formal school – appointed in preference to them.

Decision-making processes are not always clear and facilitators do not know what kinds of things interviewers are looking for. Interviews with Unit staff seem to indicate that knowledge and understanding of the ABET system are regarded as priority. However, there was no mention of an understanding of adult learning needs or how adults learn to read. The job description for ABET facilitators (07/03/2000) lists guidance and counselling, classroom management, and extra-curricular activities, but does not explicitly mention adult learning, subject understanding or the quality of teaching required.

There is as yet no community involvement in the hiring of facilitators but it is encouraging that the Unit has indicated that it would consider this (interview with Melita Mohlala, Chief Education Specialist, 28/11/2000).

one-teacher one-job

(See section 2.2 of Chapter 2.) This policy was set in place with the commendable aim of preventing formal schoolteachers from taking up all the ABET positions. While it has helped unemployment, it has also meant that ABET facilitators, who work a maximum of 24 hours a month, are prevented from earning money in any other way during the remainder of the month. To its credit, the Department is prepared to rethink its policy on this[5] (Melita Mohlala, interview, 28/11/2000).

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learning group size	The requirement that there should be 20 learners in order for a learning group to be funded and the educator paid means that facilitators are retrenched if numbers are not sustained, and learners either leave or are merged into other groups of different levels[6,7]. Learners mention this as a problem – they feel 'skaam om te leer' (ashamed to learn) in front of the ones who are perceived as 'meer slim' (cleverer), and more advanced learners feel neglected or bored, and do not have appropriate materials. Often only the evening class is retained, reducing the number of women who attend, particularly younger women.
regulations	Facilitators have to cope with a confusing array of new terms, for example, all the language associated with outcomes-based education and unit standards, and a range of documents and forms that use this terminology, such as learning programme guides, lesson plans, continuous assessment forms. The lesson plan form in use is opaque – it is possibly appropriate for experienced educators but in other cases only superficially valuable as evidence that the facilitator attended.
locations of public adult learning centres	Apartheid divisions in the location of PALCs are still in place, but the ABET Unit has plans in place to deracialise provision through representation of different races on school governing bodies (ABET Unit Strategic Plan, 2001). In some cases, though, for example in Mataleng, learners are unwilling to move to centres in different places because of the danger of walking around at night. This affects the number of learners that attend and consequently the facilitator's job security.
times of classes	Most centres hold classes in the early evening when women with young children are likely to be responsible for household tasks such as cooking and childcare. An analysis of age in the groups observed shows that with one exception the average

	age of learners in ABET Level 1 classes was over 40 and often considerably more. Although younger women may be excluded by the time at which classes are held the majority of learners are still women. These issues of age and gender raise questions about the form and content of literacy provision at Level 1. (See also 3.5.2 in this chapter.)
monitoring and evaluation	Currently the creation of Cluster Programme Managers is an effective way of improving the *efficiency* of the system. However, CPMs are not currently responsible for *quality assurance* and this aspect is not part of their jobs. There is an urgent need for support and mentoring for inexperienced facilitators trying to implement new forms of education. Developing the skills of CPMs to do this kind of *quality assurance* would be a visionary and cost-effective move.

4.1 Comment

These 'hard factors' are all short-term decisions, often dictated by political or economic imperatives. They determine the conditions under which educators work, but the kinds of administrative and other demands made on educators also shape the kind of learning that takes place. Many of these factors negatively affect CACE-trained educators from applying the skills and knowledge they have acquired.

Hard factors can sometimes be quickly remedied by policy changes if they are found to be counter-productive. Soft factors, on the other hand, are educational issues which can usually only be addressed by longer term planning. The following features of current provision in public adult learning centres indicate the kinds of barriers that facilitators face when trying to transform their practices. ('Soft factors' related to the CACE Certificate course are discussed in Chapter 3 and those related to the Advanced Diploma in Chapter 2.)

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Soft factors

curriculum vision and goals

The curriculum in evidence in ABET classrooms and in the facilitator training manuals provided by the NGO in charge of cascade training makes some attempt to address the socio-political goals captured in the ABET policy documents, for example, 'codes' are present in the facilitator handbook. However, these are not currently linked to critical thinking and analysis or to planning for action; they are only used as a way into sentence generation (see section 2.4.2). Even this simplified version of meaningful literacy seems to have had little impact on practice: we did not see any code posters in ABET sessions, or any sign of 'word or sentence boxes', mentioned in the facilitator handbook. This may, however, be a feature of the time of year. One facilitator said, as an afterthought, she did use posters, but she had to be prompted as to how the ensuing discussion was linked to literacy work.

There is little evidence of how the ABET policy vision (economic, social and political participation) can be translated into learning or facilitator training materials. The only evidence of gender issues is that women are represented equally in the texts and illustrations. The curriculum can be said to be 'gender-neutral': by ignoring gender, it becomes a 'non-issue ... neither examined nor changed' (Stromquist 1992:5).

literacy methodology

Observations and interviews appear to indicate that literacy methodology is not sufficiently coherent (see section 2.4.2). An attempt is made to draw on learners' knowledge and experience and use this for sentences but there is little emphasis on meaning. Reading out loud seems to be used as the test of literacy. There is little scope for extending the higher order skills that learners already have.

training and support	Training and support is essential for any educator trying to implement an innovation. At the moment, facilitators receive short, isolated pieces of training at intervals during the year – this is dictated by distance and other constraints. The danger is that those without a solid base of ETD and subject expertise will be unable to integrate all these pieces into a coherent frame.
learners' beliefs and expectations	Beliefs and expectations are a powerful factor. In Noupoort, learners suggested uniforms as a way to attract others to the centres and create a sense of belonging. They also expressed a preference for sitting in rows because then they cannot copy from each other (see Chapter 6, Case study 1). Gently moving learners towards alternative visions and new kinds of learning experience takes confidence, experience and skill, and support from institutional processes.
values	The ABET Unit's main focus has been on improving the efficiency of the system. This was a necessary part of gearing up the system and getting procedures in place. However, efficiency and accountability are in danger of being prized over educational quality. Participation and access are valued but as yet learners have few avenues for asserting control, deciding on or articulating needs. Facilitators also have insufficient support in implementing new skills and knowledge. The Strategic Plan for 2001 does not address this need for pedagogical support or the accompanying need for mid-level skills development in order to offer this support. The ABET Unit acknowledge quality as the next imperative.

3.4.2 Comment

This analysis suggests that CACE training is only one of many influences on facilitators in PALCs – adult learning principles, literacy teaching and contextual knowledge become submerged under the cumulative weight of policies, systems, requirements, and the lack of congruence between CACE teaching and learning processes and the materials that facilitators are given to work with. Facilitators find it easier to go with the system in place. Their vulnerability to job loss under the contract system also inhibits them from taking initiatives and from suggesting alternatives.

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3.5 The broader political, economic, social and technological context

There are a range of broader factors outside the direct control of CACE or the ABET Unit that impact on attempts to transform ABET. Some of these are discussed in the case studies in Chapter 6. Two that were frequently mentioned in interviews are community context and learner profile.

3.5.1 Community context

The degree of poverty and the economic opportunities in a community impact on the facilitator: learners feel that there is little point in coming to classes as there are no jobs and no opportunities to use the skills they acquire. Interviews with learners and facilitators rendered a wide range of views on how the centres can attract more learners. The overwhelming opinion of learners and facilitators interviewed is that people need income-generating skills. The department is attempting to respond by piloting a new vision of a learning centre, the multi-purpose community centre (see Baatjes, May 2000), which integrates education and training as well as support for small businesses and access to information and services.

3.5.2 Learner profile

In most centres 75% of learners in Level 1 are over 50 years old, and the majority of these are women. This issue raises questions about the form of provision that is most suitable for these learners.

Children from farms attend classes with much older adults because the primary schools will not accept children over 12 in Grade 1. The PALCs take them in, we assume, without permission. Currently no special provision is made for them in materials or methodology. However, this problem could form the basis for a family literacy initiative (Agneta Lind, personal communication, 07/03/2001).

4. CONCLUSIONS

This section summarises the findings in relation to the research questions.

To what extent have CACE alumni contributed to public adult learning centres? (research question 3)

The impact of CACE courses on the practices of students in the public adult learning centres has been disappointing. On the one hand, students are using their knowledge of adult learning in the classroom: there is evidence of democratic and supportive relationships with learners and of good facilitation skills, and at Level 3 and 4 facilitators use issues such as workplace health and the provision of services by local government as learning content. On the other hand, the literacy content and methodology remain a concern. All facilitators respond to learners' needs by helping them with pensions, labour problems, and so on, and learners therefore gain greater access to information and services. Yet facilitators seem to see this 'community advisor' role as separate from their role as ABET educator in the classroom; learners' needs are rarely the vehicle for literacy teaching. Nevertheless, some learners do acquire basic literacy skills and analysis of a small sample indicates that some CACE students achieve a higher than average pass rate.

Achievements are evident in the effective teaching of ***Small Business Skills*** at ABET Level 4, in more efficient planning and monitoring by Cluster Programme Managers, and in more effective recruitment of learners. There is a limited but distinct impact in terms of participatory democracy: some learners become more involved in community structures and others are assisted to gain access to information and services.

To what extent have programmes facilitated by CACE fitted the needs of participants and their communities in terms of personal careers and ETDPs? (research question 1)

The research points to the fact that it is very difficult for facilitators to implement a methodology such as REFLECT without close and continued support. REFLECT methodology, while strongly appropriate for literacy in community-based contexts, will probably not work in public adult learning centres with heterogeneous groups of learners and different learning purposes unless the facilitator is highly skilled and experienced. It might become more viable once the vision of multi-purpose community centres is a reality, with groups able to request classes geared to their particular needs. However, in the current context of state provision, the ***ABET for Development*** module did not equip students sufficiently to implement learning programmes with development potential (CACE outcome specified in Narrative Report, May–December 1998), or to train adults in literacy in their mother tongue.

All other Certificate modules can be said to have met the needs of students working in ABET, in other sectors and in development more broadly. The Certificate as a whole meets the unit standards for development practitioners (Draft 2, December 2000:7). Graduates could probably be accredited for these unit standards with little additional work. The Certificate meets the unit standards for adult learning at ABET Level 4 (May 2000) and some of those at Level 5. Content is currently being adjusted in line with these emerging standards. However, the dual focus of the Certificate is important and should be retained.

To what extent has curriculum material been of use to participants in their work or communities? (research question 2)

Students in public adult learning centres do not seem to have drawn on the literacy sections of the ***ABET for Development*** module. One inmate teaching in Correctional Services said he found the module helpful; he was working with a group of people with similar experiences and needs which may have made it easier to use the approach suggested. The module on ***Training Small Business Developers*** was successful in preparing facilitators to teach these skills and holds still greater potential for small business skills at other levels. Other modules such as ***Organising Skills*** and ***Facilitating Adult Learning*** are often used.

How successfully has development been linked in the work of alumni? (research question 4)

For those students working in public adult learning centres there is not as yet any clear link between their work as facilitators and the development needs of the surrounding communities. While some facilitators act as community advisors and help learners gain access to a range of rights and services, developing the literacy and other skills to access these rights does not form part of the materials currently in use in PALCs. There are isolated cases of learners in ABET classes also belonging to income-generating projects, in one case at least initiated by the facilitator, but there is only one instance of a direct link between the literacy or other needs of learners in these projects and the skills and knowledge acquired in ABET classes.

What were the differences in impact between the 1997 and 1999 deliveries of the programme? (research question 6)

In the interview sample, three times as many Certificate students from the second cycle are currently employed as facilitators than from the first cycle (see Table 3.2). Of all interviewees, most (21) are teaching at ABET Level 1 but a few teach at other levels as well (five at Level 2, four at Level 3, six at Level 4 of whom two are teaching Small Business Development skills). There are also more CPMs and supervising teachers from the second cycle. The second cycle seems to have been more successful in preparing students for work in the learning centres. However, the shifting policies and priorities in 1997–8 also played a role in determining the number of students from the first cycle who entered

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or remained in the system, so no clear conclusions can be drawn. The inclusion of ***Small Business Skills*** in the second cycle was very successful and could have even greater impact if PALCs offered this course at the lower levels of ABET.

Research question 7 dealing with the relationship between the CACE training and the ABET Unit's INSET training has been extensively discussed above and recommendations made below.

As far as question 9 is concerned, there have been no 'unintended' consequences in relation to students in learning centres. However, there are some unanticipated consequences, for example, some students' excellent performance as CPMs. Also, two students have received Provincial Educator Awards, which they attribute to the CACE training. One of these students was also awarded a bursary to study further.

Were the ideas and intentions appropriate for the environment – both social and educational – of students on the course? (research question 5)

The ideas and intentions behind the Certificate ***ABET for Development*** module were appropriate for the social context in which students find themselves teaching. However, they do not seem to fit well within the current environment of the adult learning centres. As we have tried to show in section 3.4 in this chapter, students' educational intentions in the adult centres are influenced by a range of institutional factors. In addition, the need to hold on to a job in the insecure world of ABET may mean that students do not feel confident to try out new ideas, particularly when pedagogical support is lacking.

The broad adult education focus evident in the course has been successful in equipping students to act in a range of development contexts. This is discussed in Chapter 5.

5. PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS

The central issue seems to be to find ways of increasing the overlap between the ABET Unit's vision, policies and practices, and CACE's vision, principles and approaches, and in this way to enable facilitators in the system to work in a way which more effectively meets the national goals for ABET. This would involve increased levels of consultation amongst all those providing training in the Province, including skills or technical training. Those involved in particular areas such as literacy or language should agree on a basic set of principles to ensure coherence.

5.1 ABET Unit

5.1.1 Staff and systems

In the area of staff and systems, it is recommended that the ABET Unit:

- strengthens the skills and understanding of middle-level management, e.g. regional coordinators – to enhance strategic planning capacities, further in-depth training in adult education, literacy and development should be provided;
- provides ongoing developmental support to facilitators, Cluster Programme Managers and Regional Coordinators to enable them to find practical ways of linking literacy and other skills to broader development, including income-generation;
- makes the emphasis in facilitator performance on the quality of teaching and to achieve this, expands the role of Cluster Programme Managers to include mentoring – particularly in reading and writing skills development at all ABET levels – and offers training to support this new role;
- makes explicit in staff training the need for encouragement, confidence-building and sympathy towards staff at all levels of the system;

- improves channels of communication by efficiently disseminating key information (for example, information about training should get to facilitators well before they are required to attend);
- improves interpersonal relations through training all levels of staff in conflict resolution and interpersonal skills; and
- places a clear value on facilitators – even if this is what the Department feels it does, the message is often distorted and facilitators feel insecure, undervalued, and sometimes intimidated.

5.1.2 Employment practices

In the area of employment practices, it is recommended that the ABET Unit:

- consider ways of reducing the instability and demotivation caused by the nine-month contract, e.g. a two-year (24 month) contract which would increase stability and motivation, deepen the level of skills, and provide continuity for learners;
- consider the Western Cape model of full-time contracts moving to permanent positions by 2002 (see Section 2.1) for long-term planning;
- revise the one-teacher, one-job policy to allow part-time teachers to gain income during the hours which they are not working;
- refine the selection process for facilitators and include community representation; and
- ensure an understanding of how to develop reading and writing skills.

5.1.3 Facilitator training

Creating a stable workforce

The success of the system rests on facilitators retaining a stable, skilled, experienced cadre is essential or there is no point in having the superstructure of skilled ABET Unit staff, systems, processes, etc. Facilitators are the pillars of the ABET system: if a large proportion of these pillars are routinely shuffled or replaced with others of different capacity and strength, the system will focus its energies on keeping upright rather than being able to respond creatively to changing needs. It is, therefore, recommended that the ABET Unit aims to retain and increase capacity by extending existing skills rather than retraining new facilitators every year in the same set of limited skills.

Shifting the focus

This study has identified many problems associated with the Level 1 classes. In order to avoid these problems (endless repetition by learners and associated costs and lack of motivation, the lack of real understanding of literacy/ies and consequently a lack of linkages to broader development) it is recommended that the ABET Unit shifts the focus of skills training to Level 1 and puts the best facilitators at this level[8].

It is essential for facilitators at this level to have contextual understanding in order to be able to link literacy skills to learners' needs in meaningful ways. This is more important at Level 1 than at any other level because these learners face the greatest learning difficulties; efficiency rates worldwide as well as in the Northern Cape show that learners drop out quickly if they see no immediate relevance to their lives. This means that newly matriculated or otherwise inexperienced and unqualified people are likely to be perpetuating problems rather than alleviating them. Properly qualified and experienced facilitators are more able to implement flexible, creative approaches to ABET and to adapt their knowledge to each new context and each new group of learners.

It is thus recommended that the ABET Unit rethink budget allocations in terms of who teaches at which level. It could, in fact, cut costs in the long run to employ well-trained people at Level 1.

Reading for meaning

It is recommended that the Unit includes top-down and bottom-up skills in the development of literacy: facilitators who feel secure with phonics must also understand that if they only teach phonics, without developing any understanding of reading as meaningful and purposeful, they are actually making it more difficult for learners. Although there seems to be no one best way to teach literacy (Oxenham 2000:258), it is possible to move towards something approximating reading for meaning which incorporates an element of contextualised and purposeful phonics. An approach that integrates phonics with reading and writing for meaning from the beginning seems to be more successful in motivating and retaining learners (see, for example, Archer and Cottingham 1996).

To this end, the ABET Unit should increase the rigour of literacy skills training offered by providers: insist on facilitators leaving the training with an understanding of how adults learn to read and how to use this understanding in relation to everyday texts. All facilitators should also have some idea of how to link literacy and ABET work to broader development. At Level 1, outcomes and the accompanying documentation are only important for accountability and clarity about learning goals. Far more important is an approach to learning that guarantees learners will be excited and interested by what they learn in the classroom AND that what they learn will have a real impact on their lives outside the learning group.

It is further recommended that the ABET Unit:

- reduces the amount of 'noise' to be absorbed by facilitators, especially inexperienced ones: develop a clear, simple set of outcomes and guidelines, e.g. *After three months your learners should be able to ..., if they are still not able to, then do the following ...*; and
- provides facilitators with skills on recognising learning difficulties.

5.1.4 Forms of provision

Offering short courses

As part of the move towards multi-purpose community centres, consider offering skills training and other short courses such as leadership, conflict resolution, legal rights, health at all levels but especially Levels 1 and 2. Responses from facilitators and learners seem to indicate that these would motivate people to come to the centres and it is possible that the demand for literacy and numeracy may grow out of exposure to other knowledge and skills. (The funding mechanisms for these courses are discussed in Appendix 11.)

Creating an enabling environment

Create the environment for a more localised, contextualised form of ABET at Level 1 with facilitators free to teach in people's homes, etc. monitored by CPMs.

Set up joint mechanisms with other Departments to attach a facilitator to each Health or Social Services grant for small business and each Labour training programme. Employ these facilitators on a year's contract; even if other Department's training is shorter, facilitators can support and extend people's literacy, language, numeracy and other skills as they continue with their businesses.

Dropping level 1 placement test and final exam

Consider having no placement test or exam at Level 1 – just an entry test for Level 2. This is particularly important given that in most centres 75% of the learners in ABET Level 1 are over the age of 50, and of these the majority are women. These learners are not likely to move through the system, although the path will still be there, if they wish to. Their focus will be elsewhere: on using their literacy skills within the community in various ways.

Designing strong learning programmes

Inexperienced and barely trained facilitators cannot be expected to design learning programmes; this requires high level skills and a strong foundation of adult learning and reading/writing theory and contextual understanding. People need several years' experience to be able to contextualise all these skills and knowledge appropriately for a particular learning group (see also the Chisholm review of Curriculum 2005, page 46, on similar issues in formal schooling). Therefore, discuss with training partners ways of moving facilitators towards these skills, that is, starting at Level 1 with a structured learning programme which nevertheless allows scope for flexibility and creativity for those who feel confident enough. Provide workshops to extend facilitators' skills and offer support and mentoring as they attempt to implement a more needs-based approach. Ensure that the curriculum pays attention to civic education, especially issues of discrimination, racism, gender and special needs. Consider the fact that programmes in the USA offer a year's training on participatory curriculum development and reading and writing skills development before expecting facilitators to implement such an approach. Think through the structure of the Certificate course with CACE in order to ensure it meets the needs of the multi-purpose community centre model for adult learning.

Providing sound learning materials

A year spent on learning to match capital and small letters is a waste of learners' time and energy and of the Unit's resources; the 27% throughput or efficiency rate confirms the need for new forms of provision at Level 1. Consider an evaluation of learning materials, especially those used at Level 1, against national policy documents and goals, as well as against current understandings of how adults learn to read (and learn an additional language) by an international literacy expert (for example, Auerbach, Bhola, Fordham).

Where possible, draw on local resources – there is an excellent set of small issue-based readers in all local languages with comprehension questions produced by the Kimberley Literacy Project (an NGO). While not developed specifically towards national outcomes, they nevertheless meet these outcomes more successfully than many other materials on the market. If they were placed within a framework of an action-learning or problem-posing cycle as conceptualised in CACE materials and combined with a rigorous and creative set of reading and writing skills, they would provide the foundation of a sound literacy programme. These booklets have grown out of local issues, and would be easy to adapt to other local contexts.

5.2 CACE

5.2.1 Certificate

The most important need that emerges from observations of facilitators' action is a greater focus on literacy skills development in CACE modules – a sound understanding of how to teach reading and writing skills will transfer to any level of the ABET system and to any context. Similarly, more time and practice is needed on translating community or individual needs and interests into learning materials. However, there are two constraints on this: first, the learning hours for the Certificate have been substantially reduced by the demands of accreditation on the NQF, and second, it is uncertain how successful new or inexperienced facilitators can be in developing learning programmes.

In order to increase the impact of the course on facilitators' practices, it is recommended that CACE should consider:

- combining the section on ***Participatory Rural Analysis*** with the ***Research Skills*** module and use this as a lead into literacy for development;
- including more practical teaching experience as a requirement;

- finding ways of offering more practical support to facilitators through planning lessons, supplying resources, etc. to make the REFLECT method work OR reducing the demands of the literacy approach by concentrating initially on reading and writing skills development (the Diploma offered in 2002 could then develop the skills for integrating this knowledge with participatory curriculum development processes);
- strengthening the financial skills component of the ***Small Business Development*** module; and
- offering more computer training for students.

5.3 The ABET Unit and CACE as partners in transformation

In order to enable facilitators to meet the national goals for ABET, in other words, to help learners acquire 'knowledge, skills and attitudes required for social, economic and political participation' (Department of Education 1997), the partners need to explore ways of increasing the common ground between the ABET Unit's vision, policies and practices, and CACE's vision, principles and approaches. The Department's new proposal for multi-purpose community centres sees these centres as 'a one-stop development shopping centre for learners where they can acquire both general and technical knowledge and skills. Another interpretation views the MPCC as a learning site which enables communities to manage their own development, by providing access to appropriate information, facilities, resources, training and services' (Baatjes 2000:11). This vision is substantially closer to the developmental vision for ABET held by CACE and is also more likely to achieve some of the goals of the National Policy document as above. If this vision takes root, the scope for the kinds of knowledge and skills that students acquire on the Certificate course will substantially increase.

The experience of this partnership, in piloting new forms of training and implementation, can also provide insights into the nature of the skills needed by facilitators in order to link ABET to development in practical ways. This research has demonstrated the considerable impact that the ***Organising Skills*** module had on students' ability to build and sustain the ABET system. It also enabled students to achieve a wide range of development-related impacts (see Chapter 5). ***Contextual Studies*** and ***Research Skills*** modules had a similar if less obvious effect. It makes sense to lobby for the inclusion of such skills and, as importantly, an understanding of development in national Unit Standards for ABET practitioners. If adult education is to be a vehicle for development, then adult educators cannot afford to be without the knowledge and skills to make it work.

6. SOME QUESTIONS

This chapter has discussed some of the issues raised and problems encountered by the partners in this project as they work to transform ABET provision in the Northern Cape. Areas that need further research and debate include the following:

- What combination of factors would attract and keep learners in adult learning centres?
- Under what circumstances does the method of literacy teaching matter?
- What model of literacy provision is most appropriate for Level 1 learners?
- How can literacy and other ABET provision be more closely tied to the development needs of the province?

5 CACE STUDENTS AS DEVELOPMENT WORKERS

'The course enriched me in many ways ... We are doing something that is being called the integrated nutrition programme and most of what we are doing there is what I've gained from CACE ... We are developing the outside communities.'

(female student, Department of Health)

Summary

CACE students are involved in a remarkable variety of community projects, some of which are new. They work in a range of development contexts and in sectors such as Health and Social Services. In many instances they have been active in bringing about change. Women frequently play a leadership role in the communities in which these projects are located.

Contextual factors often pose the greatest challenge to development workers. A favourable context, network or institution will substantially increase the chances for the success of a project. Despite a multiplicity of constraints, however, many students have developed successful initiatives and have found imaginative ways to contribute to communities, sometimes discovering the confidence to take on new leadership roles. Difficulties often arise in sustaining these projects, and in many cases it is too early to assess the extent to which an initiative can have a more permanent impact. The Noupoort case study (Chapter 6) explores some of these issues in more detail.

Impacts recorded by CACE students working in communities:

- a wide range of involvements covering the entire spectrum of development work;
- greater democratisation of community structures;
- more women represented in decision-making structures and in leadership positions, including local government;
- thirteen groups, predominantly women, engaged in successful small businesses; and
- improved family health in some communities.

Aspects that merit further consideration in the light of this study:

- paying greater attention to the motivation and experience of candidates for training and development courses;
- ensuring that courses for ETDP practitioners strengthen the abilities of students to critically analyse, engage with or challenge the social and political environments from which they come, and within which they intend to work; and
- developing closer ties between sectors involved in adult education, to promote an integrated approach to development.

1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the ways in which past students are using the knowledge and skills acquired on the CACE courses in various community initiatives and in different sectors. It traces the impact of these students on the communities in which they live or work.

The information in this chapter is taken from responses to questionnaires and from semi-structured interviews. Wherever possible information was checked by interviewing others who knew or worked with informants, such as colleagues, community leaders, or managers, and by examining documents such as business plans, workshop materials, minutes of meetings, and so on. Students' projects and assignments from the course were also used as evidence.

The two main findings in this chapter concern the extent and variety of students' involvement in development and the number of past students, particularly women, who now occupy leadership positions. Some students are involved in a number of different initiatives; at least four stated on the questionnaire that there was not enough space to fill in all their areas of involvement.

Section 2 of this chapter describes some of the students' work. Sections 3 and 4 analyse the factors that contribute to students' success in promoting development or hinder them from achieving their goals. The final section assesses the broader impact of students' work on the social, economic and political life of the communities in which they work.

2. SCOPE OF STUDENT INVOLVEMENT IN DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

In a sample of interviews with 36 students, we found 92 instances of involvement in community development initiatives.

Activities	Number of students involved
Prisoner rehabilitation programmes	2
Women & family, including domestic violence	6
Community health	8
HIV/AIDS awareness	5
Poverty alleviation programme	7
Fundraising	2
Community gardens	4
Small business development	17
Savings scheme	1
Tourism initiatives	4
Local government	4
Affirmative action	1
Youth development initiatives	7
Counselling teenagers on pregnancy and contraception	1
Church projects	11
Sports development	2
Housing	3
Academic development	1
Community police forums	5
Environmental justice	1
Total number of areas of impact	**92**
Total number of students in survey	**36**

Table 5.1 Areas of community development identified in interview sample

Table 5.1 shows a wide range and variety of projects. Although 96 past students were interviewed altogether, this sample includes only those 36 students who talked in detail about their community development work and for whose work evidence was available. If data from the remainder of the interviews and the questionnaires were included, the list would be more extensive.

The initiatives identified most frequently in responses were small business development initiatives, church projects, community health programmes (including HIV/AIDS education),

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youth development programmes, and poverty alleviation programmes. Seventeen of the initiatives can be grouped under small business development. Nine students were responsible for initiating new projects or organisations. Seven mentioned that they held leadership roles in organisations or community projects.

In a context of high unemployment, few resources and few opportunities, many communities struggle to find ways of meeting their development needs. Yet, in one under-resourced area in the Springbok region, former students are active in community centres, local development forums, local government, a spinning and weaving cooperative, the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM), church councils, school governing bodies, and the ABET Council of De Beers Consolidated Mines (Terry Grove, Dissemination conference, 18/04/01).

On the basis of this evidence alone, it might be concluded that the CACE provision has had a significant impact and helped to promote and support community development in a variety of contexts. However, it would be too easy to infer success from these findings; some of the projects reported are also the result of other influences, and not all of them are likely to be sustainable. This research reports on a handful of these projects (later in this chapter and Noupoort case study, Chapter 6). For a complete picture of the impact of CACE students on development in the Northern Cape, it would be necessary to consider in detail the operating and decision-making processes as well as the outcomes of every project. However, this was beyond the scope of this impact study. Wherever possible, business plans, project proposals, minutes of meetings and other documentation from projects were scrutinised. Sections 3 and 4 in this chapter provide a more detailed discussion of the research findings.

2.1 Development work linked to voluntarism

One Certificate student differentiates 'development work' from projects that are for personal gain: 'I'm dealing with youth. Just how to build youth. Not actually a project that you can expect money from, the project that you can build up the human beings' (female student, ABET facilitator, De Aar region, 26/11/00). This suggests a vision of development work linked to voluntarism. Another student says that she prefers volunteer work because you can 'make it fit' more closely to the needs of the people involved, in other words, volunteers are not driven by the requirements of funders or sponsors.

Successful fund-raising schemes are often driven by imaginative ways of making new connections or partnerships. One Certificate students described how they developed an innovative strategy to raise funds for a gardening project in her community:

> *'The garden project it is the one that helps a lot. We don't have funds, but we try by all means to collect cans and we give each woman a can to collect some 10 cents or 20 cents ... and when we count sometimes we even reach R1 000. And with this R1 000 we go around in the village to look for the people who are in need mostly, and then we try and help.'*
>
> (female Certificate student, Taung, Kimberley, 23/11/00)

2.2 CACE students in leadership roles

Many past students have taken on leadership roles in their organisations. Although sometimes these are not formalised or officially recognised, it is clear that CACE students often take the lead in initiating projects, and play an important role in solving problems and resolving conflicts. In interviews there are 15 direct references to students formally involved in leadership roles in the community.

Some past students in leadership roles	Roles
Female, Certificate student, Hartswater	Mayor of three districts
Female, Certificate and Diploma student, Upington region	Ward councillor
Female, Certificate and Diploma student, Kimberley region	Local councillor
Female, Diploma student, Kimberley	Church, SGB, block meetings chairperson
Female, Certificate student, Norvalspont	Chairperson of Local Development Forum, local councillor
Female, Certificate student, Kimberley	First woman on Church Council
Male, Certificate student, Postmasburg	Ward councillor
Male, Diploma student, Carnarvon	Chairperson and secretary of community police forum for local district
Male, Certificate student, Victoria West	Chairperson of local sports club
Female, Certificate student, Noupoort	Sunday school leader; Vice-chairperson of SGB
Male, Diploma student, Hartswater	Church leader (treasurer)
Male, Certificate student, Platfontein	Secretary of Community Trust
Male, Diploma student, Kimberley	HIV/AIDS projects

Table 5.2 Examples of CACE students in leadership roles

2.3 CACE students as agents of change

There is a marked difference in the level of involvement of students on the Advanced Diploma and Certificate courses. Of the Advanced Diploma students interviewed, 36% (10 students) are not involved in any community projects except church activities. Some of the reasons for this lack of involvement are discussed in Chapter 2. By comparison, the percentage of Certificate students interviewed who are not involved in community projects is 16% (11 students). While community or adult education experience was a requirement in the first cycle, many students in the second cycle were young matriculants with no prior experience[1]. This figure is, therefore, remarkable and indicates the success of the course in building confidence, motivating students and nurturing a sense of social responsibility.

Many Certificate students play multiple roles. One student who is an ABET facilitator is also involved in an agricultural project, a needlework project, and Operation Hunger. She is also a member of the management committee of a Community Development Trust and during the local elections in November 2000 was elected as a local councillor. Another student is employed by the Small Miners' Forum but is also a manager of a communications or Tele-Centre in her community, funded by Universal Service Agency. She volunteers on various projects; writing business plans for small

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businesses and proposals for job creation and poverty alleviation schemes. She is also involved in the community policing forum and in a project set up to establish local AIDS centres. In November 2000, she was elected mayor of three districts. While these two students are exceptional, many others are involved in more than one initiative, generally in their spare time.

There is no correlation between student unemployment and lack of involvement: 73% (13) of those students who are unemployed are active in one or more organisations or structures, four of them in leadership positions. As has been established in Chapter 3, there is also no correlation between completing the course and involvement in community structures or initiatives; many of those who dropped out are still very active.

It is significant that the number of men who are not involved in development initiatives is twice that of women. This seems to indicate that women are playing a steadily increasing role in determining the future of their communities. Age patterns seem to indicate a trend for greater commitment with age and maturity: 26% (10) of all respondents in the 26–35 age group as compared to 11% (3) in the 36–45 age group list no community involvement. Otherwise, there is no pattern for language, region, current employment or previous employment.

Interviews appear to indicate that personal inclination, values, confidence and motivation play a major role in deciding whether or not students use what they have learnt on the courses in community contexts. Prior involvement in community work of some kind is a contributing factor, but not for all students.

Below are two brief case studies of Certificate students who are not involved in development activities, followed by a description of some highly active students working in various sectors.

Case study 1

Rose dropped out of the course in her second year of the Certificate. She does not seem to have had a personal motivation for going on the course; she speaks about 'being sent', and then finding out that it was something different to her expectations: 'To tell the truth, I didn't know we were going to study.' She says she was not aware exactly what she was enrolling for. This reflects the problems encountered during the second cycle when unemployed and newly qualified school teachers were told by the Department of Education to apply for the course on the understanding that they would be getting a job.

Although initially involved in facilitating ABET classes, Rose is not involved in any community work. She explains this by mentioning her lack of energy, and changes in her personal life (marriage and illness).

(Upington region, 10/11//00)

Case study 2

Abner works in a resource centre for an NGO on a voluntary basis. When he started the Certificate course he was involved as a tutor and coordinator of an adult education programme there. His role in the centre does not appear to have changed at all, although he says the programme in the centre has shifted its focus to project management. When asked whether he works full-time or part-time the student responded in a somewhat circular manner:

> *'I will not mention if it's part-time or full-time. The reason why I'm say that I cannot mention it's because it's a voluntary job. [Indistinct] ... I cannot say if it is full-time or part-time because I am going, I only use my energy every day.'*

(Upington region, 09/11/00)

Asked why he became interested in doing the CACE Certificate, Abner suggests this was because of his interest in development:

> *'My interest in CACE courses is that since I am busy with development, development is my life and is my concern for developing our place – area – because of the high illiteracy of our adult people in our area and specifically speaking about the basic needs of the exploited people of South Africa, which made me interested.'*
>
> (ibid.)

Here he seems to answer in a way that he thinks the interviewer expects. Later, when questioned about the factors that help him in his development work, he does not appear to understand the question. He cannot provide any concrete examples of the community development work in which he is involved. When pressed for details, he mentions the role he plays in parcelling up books donated to the community centre he works for.

This student is most coherent when he talks about how it is essential for CACE to ensure that CACE students get employment on completion of the course, because unlike 'ordinary teachers' they know how to teach adults and to facilitate. Asked what skills he found useful on the course he mentions organising skills, yet he cannot elaborate on any way in which he has applied these skills.

Comment on the case studies

The interview in Case study 2 above is characterised by an absence of any kind of engagement and a strange emptiness to responses: what is ***not*** said is more significant than what is said.

Both respondents were thin in terms of detail: they resisted offering detailed information and were almost lethargic in their responses. Both lacked clear motivation for participating in the course. While one had some organisational involvement before going on the course, both failed to integrate the course into their lives in any meaningful way.

The failure of the Certificate course to act as a catalyst in these two cases can be contrasted with the dynamism of the Certificate students discussed below. The following sections describe the ways in which students in various sectors have used skills and knowledge learnt on the Certificate course.

2.3.1 Department of Health

Three students working for the Department of Health were interviewed. Two are employed as community health workers. The third is employed as a cleaner but is nevertheless regularly called on to accompany the clinic sisters to workshops. Her ability to relate to the adults who attend workshops and her skills in facilitating are recognised but not officially acknowledged: attempts to have her job status upgraded have not succeeded.

The following extract from an interview with a female student in the Kimberley region describes the process the two community health workers went through with one community, working with a range of stakeholders and partners in other departments, to develop skills and structures for a multi-faceted development process.

Health worker For example, in Griquastad we had a meeting with the community there. It is not a big place. So there are about three small towns there and we had a meeting with those people and then we explained to them that we wanted to help them because there was a problem when children were weighed and measured [malnutrition]. And what we do we said to them they must choose amongst them – the community should choose people that they think will be their leaders, the people that we can train so that those people when we are no longer there can go on implementing what we have taught them. And three from each area were chosen and then we had a course, a small course that we called the integrated nutrition programme course where we had help from people. It was us and the people from the Social Development [Services], people from Environmental Development, people from Labour and then we made a group. And as one who had the skills from CACE of facilitating, we had now to come and facilitate to these people and teach them about – you know, find from them about their resources and what is it they can make. They had to tell us what it is they have, the resources they have, and we had to just help them use what they have to their advantage.

Interviewer For example?

Health worker For example, we found out that Griquastad is such a – the unemployment rate is very high. Alcohol abuse is very high and teenage pregnancy. There isn't much resources that those people can use except there are flat stones that could make, that could build and make something like a 'stoep' [veranda] and so on. And with that we are still in progress at the moment. We are trying to find out because they have to have a big truck where they can go and fetch these things and you know sort of - how can I put it. They have to shape these flat stones and with that they can sort of sell them in the neighbouring towns ... And one other thing was people there their soil is not rich but some of them, most of the people are seasonal workers and they can use that to their advantage by knowing what to plant when. And we are going to try and find a bigger plot and start by making demo gardens at first to see if that will be successful. We are still busy at the moment having meeting after meeting because we couldn't just go in there. We are working hand in hand with the community leaders there and the organisational leaders, the churches and so on. So that is still in process at the moment.

... One other thing we found out is that there is a school that is getting funds from our department – the nutrition department – for the primary school nutrition programme. So there isn't any bakery in Griquastad – they are getting their bread from Kimberley. So we thought again about starting a bakery there. Bread making – so they could make a contract with the school and be sure that the school buys bread from them on a monthly basis. That would be a standing contract and definitely they would be sure that money would be coming in every day and people can also buy bread from that bread making project because definitely there isn't a bakery around there.

Interviewer And where would the initial money for that come from?

Health worker Our department – the nutrition department has funds for small projects as long as it goes along with nutrition and so on. So a project proposal was written down and it is not an overnight thing. It is still in process too.

Interviewer And how do people decide who will be involved?

Health worker We are very much involved with the community. We have found out that in many places where there is so much alcohol abuse and whatever, people are so lazy. They don't want to do anything. There are those who are willing to do because we have a meeting every time and then we wanted people who could volunteer. And one other thing that was very important was to let them know that there is no pay. They have to work first voluntarily so that they can see if this is going to lead them somewhere. And we had young people who were volunteering to take part in the projects but most of the people – the elders there are just people that have told themselves it is over ... And one other thing we have tackled the problem of teenage pregnancy because most teenagers don't know anything about contraception and HIV/AIDS and so on. So we are trying to put that into perspective as well.

... And one other thing is our distance between Griquastad and Kimberley. We have to plan always when we go there. That is why it is so much important that the community there should be involved. They shouldn't just depend on us because they know their people well enough. We only go there on sessions like when we went there to give them this INP course – the integration nutrition programme course. We were there for a period of two weeks and we were learning from them as much as they were learning from us. We wanted to know much about their problem and we just helped them. Because there were a group of ANC Youth League youths who were very much informed we didn't find much difficulty in telling them about development and finding out about their resources and their problems.

Interviewer So you are saying there is some connection between political involvement and ...

Health worker Exactly.

Interviewer And when you mentioned the teenage pregnancy issue, how did you go about addressing that?

Health worker There were workshops although we want to put them in an ongoing process so that the message can be well received. We had about three workshops where these youths from the ANC Youth League were taking the lead and we were just pushing them behind. Because we knew that at some stage we would just have to let them carry on.

Interviewer Is there any evidence that behaviour has changed as a result?

Health worker Not yet. I don't think it is going to be an overnight thing. It isn't because one other thing that we found out there wherever there is poverty and unemployment definitely teenage pregnancy is going to be very high.

This student identifies the ***Facilitating Adult Learning*** module as having helped a lot:

> *'coming into a class with people, I don't just come there as if I know. I've got inside that there's a lot I've got to know from these people. And as a facilitator I'm not coming to teach, I'm coming to put our ideas together and find out which way can we go ... It changed my looking at the person and thinking she doesn't know anything. It taught me people know. It might not be what I know, but there is something that they know. For instance, as I'm starting the diabetic support group I am finding out that mostly the people that I am working with are over 50. And I don't just come to them and say, "People you have to eat a lot of carbohydrates, you have to do this." I always find out from them what is it that they eat, what is it that they have found out. One thing that I have found out is that they do have their own remedies like herbs, which they say if you're having diabetic they do regulate your blood sugar level. And that has taught me also that I must find out first from the people what is it that they know ... then I can only fill in with what I think they don't know.'*
>
> (female student, Department of Health, 30/10/00)

Other projects that these health workers have initiated include health forums, a breast-feeding support group and a small business selling prepared vegetables to hospitals, clinics, and township residents. For the latter two projects, the CACE student concerned was entered in the Sowetan Woman of the Year competition.

The striking things about the interviews with students in the Health Department were:

- the integrated approach to development, evident in the Department of Health's provision of funds for nutrition-related projects, but implemented with creativity and insight by CACE students;
- the links promoted between improved health and income-generation;
- the participatory planning and decision-making processes;
- the development of skills and structures within the community for managing their own development;
- the evidence of sound understanding of adult learning;
- an ability to design interventions relevant to community needs;
- an ability to work cooperatively with stakeholders and other departments; and
- the amount that can be achieved by one or two individuals with vision and skills.

2.3.2 Department of Social Services

Students working in the Social Services Department find the Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) tool taught to them in the ***ABET for Development*** module particularly helpful in facilitating the process of development planning in small towns.

> *'We sent out letters now for the structures in town X because we must submit a new business plan for job creation in this town. They just want to send out letters today to ask the structures to come together so that we can go to the community and make sure that the project that are coming to the town are the projects that the people wants, that they really wants. That's why ... we've learned a lot how to do this at CACE. This maybe ... there's a PRA tool that you can use and that method you can use just to help the people to sort what they really need.'*
>
> (female student, rural, De Aar region, 22/09/00)

When asked if ABET facilitators were included in these community meetings, she replied that they were not but that she would take it up. Potential for ABET provision to support developments initiated by other sectors is great but would require flexibility and support for facilitators from the Department of Education.

This student applies the same PRA tool to family debates:

> *'I normally try to use it, in different cases ... I think about that PRA tool and ... I'll do it as well in my house with my kids. And then I sit ... I'm not doing the pure aim of the method, but it's in the back of my mind and then I sit together with them and ask: "Is it that you want now? What is the most thing that you want at this moment? Oh, you want this? Oh, you want this?" They come with a list. They want this, this, this, this, this. And I sit and then I say: "Okay, do you want this one before this one? No, this one can leave." And at the end of the day just only two things that they want, really want, nobody have a long list. And that is ... you can use it in your house, it's not you can use it only in the community, you can use it also in your house. And the thing I'm very proud of that.'*

The Provincial Head of Social Welfare, who was the first person to have the Advanced Diploma qualification in the Northern Cape, feels that while the Social Work course at UWC is good it does not deal with how to link projects to development. He therefore recommends that all new staff do the Certificate. After 1994, with the appearance of the White Paper for Social Welfare, the nature of the Department's work changed. The new approach was more development-oriented and entailed a move from casework towards a drive for poverty alleviation. He sees the Certificate as 'a means to capacitate staff to take control over the situation in smaller towns' (telephone interview, 02/03/01). He sees evidence that students are 'empowered to deal with day-to-day needs of department, to chair meetings, committees, run workshops ... and facilitate the process'. He feels that Certificate students are more assertive and definitely more successful than those who have not done the course. He cites poverty alleviation projects in Britstown, set up by a past CACE student, as among the most exciting and successful in the region. These are a brick-making project and vegetable garden.

2.3.3 Department of Labour

One past student from CACE is employed by the Department of Labour as a trainer. She came on to the Certificate course with experience in literacy teaching in a non-governmental organisation (NGO) but when the NGO was forced to close by a lack of funding she looked for something else to do. She realised that the CACE course was 'so broad' that she had the skills to do something different: 'I just said to myself: "OK these people, if I can't train them to read and write, let me think of another thing." And then I found myself doing training under the Department of Labour' (02/11/00).

All her training is for those who are unskilled and unemployed. She sets up and trains a committee and then trains the participants to set up and run their own business. She also helps with marketing:

> *'Concerning a sale I did recently ... I found that here in the Northern Cape our children are all wearing black and white so I then started to say okay, I called meetings with the school governing bodies, school principals, all the schools. [I said] "Let us go back to the old uniforms that we can be recognised with the colours of the schools." And then fortunately they accepted it so it is a big market for making school uniforms.'*

So far she has trained seven groups with between 12 and 20 people each, all women. Although she has tried to include men, she has not succeeded. Funding for training comes from the Department of Labour; seed funding for equipment can sometimes be obtained from the RDP funds or the Department of Social Services or Eskom. All the projects are making a small profit.

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2.3.4 Correctional Services

Two inmates and two staff members did the Certificate course. Mangaliso is a prison inmate who found that the course was

> *'great, really it was great because it opened a whole new world to me in particular. I realised that I had some abilities in me, which I didn't know I had before. I never thought about being an educator before. So after attending the course that is where I saw there were certain things I could do. That I could actually get involved with teaching people trying to empower people, make them realise that they are not useless and that there is still hope for them, more especially being in prison.'*
>
> (male student, Kimberley region, 20/10/00)

Mangaliso then began to

> *'get involved in almost everything that is relevant to our daily life in prison. Apart from teaching I was involved in projects like giving counselling to inmates, those who were involved in drugs and that stuff. And those who were involved in gangsterism, although that was a little bit dangerous. I was challenging it. You see I spoke to them and I was also trying to help those who were trying to quit smoking so I pulled them together and I spoke to them about the dangers of smoking and so on. So I spoke to the prison management in Upington that I have got quite a lot of people who want to quit smoking and those who are not smoking, so how would it be if they could arrange a cell or a place where they could stay alone away from those smokers? When that was about to be arranged, I was moved to Kimberley, so I don't know how far they did get ...'*

Both CACE students in prisons passed on their small business development skills to other inmates. One is still phoned by former inmates on the outside for advice. (See further under section 2.3.9 later in this chapter and in Chapter 3.)

The Provincial Head of Education and Training (18/01/01) says the Department does not use the inmates who did the Certificate. It depends on the management of different institutions. He considered the course to have had a positive effect, not only in terms of what students learnt but 'the experience of socialisation' and the people they interacted with. Some would like to make a career out of ABET.

2.3.5 Community development

One interesting example of CACE students' contribution to community development is that of the four students who belong to the !Xû and Khwe communities. Originally from Namibia, the men were forcibly enlisted by the South African Defence Force in Namibia during the 1980s. After Namibian independence, the communities were moved to South Africa and settled on an old army base, Schmidtsdrif, about 70 kilometres from Kimberley. The settlement is on the site of an old army base; the landscape consists of laagers of khaki tents enclosed by canvas, some big hangars, thornveld and sand. Although they were promised houses, they have been marooned on this site for ten years. Conditions at Schmidtsdrif are difficult: most people are unemployed, literacy levels are very low and health problems are endemic. In 1996, the farm Platfontein was bought to resettle the communities but the process only began in 2000 (Nore et al. 1999:3). Two of the CACE students still live in Schmidtsdrif and two are now at Platfontein.

In 1995 in a situation where 'we had nothing, we just stood around' interviewees had started a project called ***Something New***, where people who had passed Matric (Grade 12) came together to study every evening. In 1997, all four of the interviewees were employed as ABET facilitators and

started with CACE the following year; three still run classes and one is a supervising teacher. Perhaps because the community is so small, they expect to get reappointed every year and do not experience the sense of vulnerability that other ABET facilitators feel.

The process of resettlement is managed by the !Xû and Khwe Trust with its offices at Platfontein. The two CACE students at Platfontein are employed by this Trust: one as the Secretary of the organisation with a high level of responsibility and as Training Officer, the other as switchboard operator. Of the two who remain in Schmidtsdrif, one is a community leader and both are on a sub-committee of the Pan South African Language Board as part of a project to document oral languages.

The students employed by the Trust felt that the course, among many things, equipped them to improve their organisation, to analyse it critically and to help others in their community understand the concept of an organisation. Although they are able to identify problems in the style of leadership of the Trust, rigid and impermeable structures mean that they are currently powerless to act on them. Despite this, all students are proud of their achievements in building the community and attribute these to the Certificate course.

2.3.6 Local government

There are five Certificate students who have been elected to positions in local government. All attribute their present positions without hesitation to their CACE studies:

> *'The CACE studies changed my life because one, I have a clear understanding now, and secondly I can be a better facilitator within my community or a presenter within my community and at the Council side. At the Council side I was elected to be in the Executive Committee and I was elected by SALGA[2] nationally to take part in the facilitating team, or to be a trainer of the Integrated Development Plan. I attend the executive leadership courses in the Western Cape University, the School of Government. Through that I think CACE put me somewhere.'*
>
> (male student, ward councillor, rural, Upington region, 21/11/00)

Others mention conflict resolution, listening and communication skills gained on the Certificate course as crucial for their work.

A researcher who watched a student in action at a pre-election meeting reports that the meeting was democratically run; all views were listened to and courteously answered, even those that challenged the candidate. In addition to being a candidate elect, this student is also an ABET facilitator, a police reservist, and chairperson of the Local Development Forum. She is involved in setting up a community garden project and another project to assist pensioners with buying groceries. She is a household name in the Norvalspont area. (research report, 02/12/00).

This student ascribes her success to the Certificate course. She identifies ***Facilitating Adult Learning***, ***Contextual Studies***, ***Organising Skills*** and ***Training Small Business Developers*** as modules that were particularly helpful and there is evidence that she applies knowledge and skills gained from all these modules.

The potential impact of the students involved in local government is enormous as they are in a position to influence the allocation of resources to those most in need. Evidence from this research shows that they are likely to do this in a participatory and consultative manner.

2.3.7 Non-governmental organisations

The one student interviewed works as coordinator of the literacy section of a rural development NGO. He says CACE equipped him with a better understanding of development after he was 'fresh from the Technikon': 'it definitely contributed to my humanity. The manner in which you communicate with people, that has stayed with me and it definitely shaped me as a human being'

(translated from Afrikaans) (male Certificate and Advanced Diploma student, rural, De Aar region, 27/11/00).

This student works with farmworkers, but also as chairperson of the school governing body and of an interim committee for sport and development. He is a member of the branch executive of the South African Communist Party. In all these contexts he uses the communication skills he learnt on the course.

2.3.8 Environmental projects

Students in the Springbok region are involved in an Anti-Nuclear Campaign to prevent the construction of a nuclear plant on their coastline. Another student is involved in a community tree-planting and income-generation project.

2.3.9 Small business development

Small business development is the single largest sector of involvement. The following figures are based on the interview sample where evidence of involvement was obtained by researchers. Of all respondents, 35% (29) were involved in small business development. Of those involved in small business development:

- 27% (8) were organisers or initiators of projects;
- 86% (25) were Certificate students;
- 14% (4) were Advanced Diploma students;
- 38% (11) are also ABET facilitators;
- 72% (21) were initiatives in rural areas; and
- 65% (19) were women.

It is significant that of the Certificate students 84% (21) are from the 1998–9 cycle. Two are students who did not complete the course. This indicates the huge impact that the ***Training Small Business Developers*** module, introduced in the second cycle, has had.

Of the women involved 18 out of 19 are working in rural areas. There is no pattern for language or age except that only three respondents were under 25 years old.

38% (11) of respondents involved in small business development are also ABET facilitators. Two initiatives involve learners from ABET classes but there is no direct link between the classes and the businesses. In interviews only one respondent felt that attending ABET classes had encouraged her learners to get involved in the business. It is, however, significant that in Noupoort all the learners involved in a sewing group are also members of an ABET class. (See the case study in Chapter 6.) This link needs further research. While the curriculum in the public adult learning centres at the lower levels is not related to the needs of small business members, it is possible that an indirect relationship exists between the skills acquired in the learning centres and learners' ability and motivation to participate in small businesses. There is potential to exploit this relationship further and ABET could stimulate small business initiatives through targeted courses.

Students also report assisting with business plans for local government and other initiatives such as poverty alleviation projects and raising funds for schools. However, many report that, while their skills are called upon to generate funds, they are not included in the project when funds are granted. Power structures in communities, sometimes based on traditional gender roles, stand in the way of further involvement.

There are many other challenges facing students working with small businesses:

- Seed funding for small businesses is often a problem: no groups in these communities have either the collateral or the 10% deposit required by the bodies such as Khula Enterprise Finance Ltd., set up by the 1996 National Small Business Act to finance small businesses. Many get initial grants from the Department of Social Services or Health, or from the Mining sector, but their businesses are not sustainable by the time the grant runs out. Local businesses are generally unwilling to help.
- Although the RDP and Eskom provide funding for projects, proposals – even when well researched and prepared – are often rejected on the basis that there are too many similar projects: 'Maybe they don't understand the need for sewing. Feeling that it's common. Ja they are just feeling too much of it is common sometimes' (female student, Department of Labour, 02/11/00). This can disadvantage women for whom sewing projects are one of the few initiatives that require skills they already have and little outlay on equipment.
- Another problem is the psychological shift from being paid every week as happened previously when people were 'on a project' to having to earn your own money and not necessarily having anything to take home at the end of the week (female student, Department of Social Services, 22/09/00). In many cases, people have been used to getting welfare grants that have been halved or stopped under the new system of Social Services: 'And it is as if now they're just lost. They just feel the government did for them [before], why not now. And we are struggling to let them know that it is time for you as a human being to stand up for yourself and work. Because if we could all sit at home and say the government will do for us, then we will definitely going to be hungry.' (Female student, Department of Health, 30/10/00)
- Insufficient marketing skills also reduce the potential of new businesses: 'the people they just stand in business, they don't market it' (female student, De Aar region, 22/09/00).
- Participants in small business initiatives face social problems that affect the group. Many women in businesses are affected by severe domestic or money problems that make them tired and unmotivated, and often cause them to leave the group.
- While the Department of Labour offers skills training for groups to equip them to earn an income, political factionalism in some communities mean that the same people attend all the courses while others are never included.

Despite these constraints, there is evidence of at least 13 businesses that are surviving and making a small profit.

The course has also had an impact inside prisons:

> *'We had a group of students we were teaching here and they really did it very well in that project. In fact, it was also a sort of an assignment from CACE. So they said we must get a few learners, two or three learners to teach them how to be businessmen. Then we got a big group of about 20. We taught them business skills, how to write business plans, how to run a successful business. They really did very good.'*
>
> (male student, Kimberley region, 20/10/00)

Some former inmates who are now starting small business initiatives contact the students still in prison to ask for advice.

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3. FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO STUDENTS' SUCCESS IN DEVELOPMENT CONTEXTS

3.1 Personal factors

As discussed in section 2.3 of this chapter, individual values, confidence and motivation play a major role in determining whether or not students use what they have learnt on the course in community contexts. Prior involvement in community work is a contributing factor, but not for all students.

3.2 Professional impact of CACE courses

Students credit both the Certificate and Advanced Diploma courses with having improved their ability to work more effectively in organisations, to participate in and run public meetings, and to run workshops. Most frequently mentioned is the area of organisational development.

Skills that students mention frequently include:

- organising skills such as running and chairing meetings;
- communication skills, such as report writing and public speaking;
- critical thinking;
- workshop design and facilitation skills;
- the ability to make business plans; and
- evaluation and research skills.

Three Certificate students refer to the Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) tool. This has been used to engage communities in planning services, in developing a nutrition programme, for training staff of the Independent Electoral Commissions for local government elections and for a workshop on substance abuse.

The assignment on the Certificate course that has had the most impact seems to have been the requirement to develop a business plan. Almost every single interviewee has applied this knowledge in some context and so is instrumental in bringing resources into his or her community.

3.3 Personal impact of CACE skills and knowledge[3]

Students mention the following:

- increased confidence and empowerment: 'The fact that I enrolled at CACE empowered me even more. It gave me that confidence to go out and to talk to people. To begin something on my own, to make something from nothing' (female student, rural, 21/11/00) (translated from Afrikaans). While 'empowerment' can mean everything or nothing, in interviews it is usually linked to an increased sense of agency.
- independence and self-reliance: The idea of 'beginning something from nothing', is a powerful endorsement of the effectiveness of the impact of the Certificate course on students and is evident in the quantity of projects initiated by students. Those who were interviewed to triangulate evidence from past students mentioned independence and the ability to take control of the situation as attributes that had struck them (officials in the ABET Unit, Department of Social Services, Department of Education, co-workers).
- enhanced sense of identity: An Advanced Diploma student describes how the course transformed his life on several levels. It has changed the role he plays in his family, taking on the care of his young daughter, and helped him develop his awareness and to value himself:

'That module on roles was also very much important for me because it made me to become, not a person who is centred around what I am doing, but I came to realise that I have got a role as an educator in a certain aspect. And I have got another role as like a social worker. I have got another role as a problem solver. I have got another role as a father to the younger ones, like the younger employees. I have got a role as counsellor to the ones that are seeming to be faltering.'

(Kimberley region, 06/11/00)

He talks about the humanising influence of the Diploma and how it changed the way he relates to and views prison inmates.

3.4 Networking

The Certificate course seems to have encouraged networking and collaboration between some students. This has had positive effects on two levels: some students refer to the successes of their peers and are motivated by them; students also use each other as resources when facing challenges:

Students	We are happy a lot, CACE. We want it to go further. It gives us our friendship because we know different people now ... Sometimes we get problems, you just phone someone and then we help each other.
Interviewer	So you have a support group? A big support group?' [laughter]

(Kuruman group interview, 04/12/00)

These networks stretch across regional boundaries and form a source of knowledge about who knows how to do what, considered by the UK Department of Education and Employment (1998:15) to be one of the kinds of knowledge essential to a 'learning economy'.

3.5 Economic factors

Initial grants for projects from the Departments of Social Services and Health or the mining sector and occasionally from parastatals seem to have had a significant impact on students' success. For example, a grant from Sishen mine led to a successful hair salon set up by a CACE student in Kathu. Many of these projects are designed to alleviate poverty and are specifically targeted at empowering women.

3.6 Contextual factors

The church is an important support base for innovative projects. CACE students mention initiating or assisting with youth development and poverty relief projects linked to the church.

Five female students mentioned the support of their husbands in looking after children and running the household when they were studying or had to travel for work.

Support from the community is also mentioned as a crucial factor: 'We get a lot of support from the community. People see that we are not playing games, we are creating jobs. you understand, something that can occupy them, so the projects we set up are [considered] very positive in the community ... People have begun to change, they realise that pensions are being cut off, so somewhere you have to make a living. [They say] 'These children [CACE students] went out, they brought something back for us, they teach us, so why can't we do something?' (female student, ABET facilitator, rural, Kimberley region, 21/11/00)(translated from Afrikaans).

4. FACTORS IMPEDING STUDENTS' SUCCESS IN DEVELOPMENT CONTEXTS

4.1 Institutional factors (Correctional Services only)

In the Department of Correctional Services, the impact that CACE students can have depends on the management of the prison at any given time. The Department initially allowed several students to take the courses, with participants including both prison inmates and prison personnel. Under this management, inmates were allowed out to study weekends and encouraged to make the most of opportunities available to them. They were also encouraged to set up groups and teach other inmates.

Inmates facilitating ABET literacy or small business classes had high learner numbers and – to go by the evidence in the assignments of one of the students – a very organised and successful programme which was greatly appreciated by the learners. A new management revoked these privileges and prevented inmates from teaching others. All but one of the course participants were transferred to other prisons.

Prison conditions also make it difficult for those who wish to study, for example, they are often kept in a special cell so that it is easier for wardens to fetch them for classes and this makes them a target for other prisoners.

The Advanced Diploma student who works in Correctional Services found that there were several barriers that restricted the application of what he learnt from the Diploma to Correctional Services. He describes the tensions between old and new ways of working, and talks about the tension between the old militarism – intensely hierarchical and rigid – and a more democratic participatory approach to policy implementation. He began questioning the dehumanising aspects of prison policy, and using what he learnt from CACE about making educational interventions in order to address these issues. He is positive about the value of these skills in terms of challenging and changing policy, but the pace of change is slow.

4.2 Economic factors

Apart from the Mining sector and some parastatals, business does not seem to support community development initiatives in any significant way. One Certificate student describes the impact of insufficient resources and the way this affects community initiatives:

> *'We had stakeholders' [meetings], but not really very many because people think that they just give out money. This is one of the things that makes people very negative, because the community does not really want to work together, especially businesses and so on. Victoria-Wes has a huge problem and that is unemployment and so if you always go to the businesses, it looks as if we are going to ask for money.'*
>
> (translated from Afrikaans) (male student, rural, De Aar region, 20/09/00)

One student points to the difficulties precipitated by donors who initially support NGOs and then pull out after a limited period. There are only three NGOs identified by respondents as still involved in ABET in the Northern Cape.

Lack of infrastructure such as roads and services make it difficult for small businesses to get their goods to customers. Transport is often unavailable.

In many cases the economic context is too weak to sustain any new initiatives. A past student and one-time ABET facilitator now working as a security officer for a bakery in another rural town is nevertheless deeply involved in community development. She describes an initiative to feed undernourished children involving all stakeholders in the town. She goes on to say:

'but these meetings must also discuss further what to do so that things like factories can come to places like Victoria-West that can give work to a large number of people so that the suffering from hunger can end in our little town because it is only when big factories like that are created where most people can get work and where the municipality can then get money for water and electricity and for everything necessary, all the things that are needed, and taxes are paid so that the economy can grow again, people can buy from the shops and small businesses can be started. So I feel that we don't need these small projects that are now being set up where people dig a few holes and buy a few trees and that's it, and they can only live on it for a month, but big projects like factories which can keep going and grow bigger and develop the town.'

(Certificate and Advanced Diploma student, former ABET facilitator now employed as a security guard, De Aar region, 09/11/00)

In Noupoort, the only cash flow in the town is derived from pensions and child grants. The buying power of the community is insufficient to sustain small businesses. However, a chemical factory is to be built in the town and it will be interesting to track the impact of this intervention on the macro-economic level in stimulating the growth of micro-enterprises. (See further Chapter 6.)

4.3 Socio-political factors

Other major problems alluded to are the consequences of corruption and mismanagement, resulting in the closure of projects, and the consequences of power still concentrated in a section of a community, which is invariably linked to racial and class tensions as well. Victoria West, for example, is described as "n gemeenskap wat eintlik geskeur is van mekaar af" (a divided, or translated literally, 'torn' community in which people work against one another) . This pattern recurs in many isolated rural communities where old apartheid divisions still hold sway, and the predominantly white business community still holds economic power.

Other students experience different kinds of constraints, such as the restrictions imposed by severe poverty and unemployment in towns like Noupoort, or the difficulties caused by power struggles and political divisions in communities like Carnarvon where factional disputes about access to resources act to inhibit change (see further the case studies in Chapter 6).

5. CONCLUSIONS: THE BROADER IMPACT OF STUDENTS WORKING IN COMMUNITIES

This section discusses the findings in relation to the research questions. Most impacts discussed below relate to Certificate students. Advanced Diploma impacts are discussed in Chapter 2, section 7.

To what extent have programmes facilitated by CACE fitted the needs of participants and their communities in terms of personal careers and ETDPs? (research question 1)

The scope and nature of CACE students' involvement in development is evidence of the extent to which the courses have met the needs of participants and their communities. Students have been able to transfer the skills and knowledge learnt to a wide variety of contexts and take advantage of a range of opportunities. For example, one student talks about applying CACE skills to running workshops on substance abuse, training for the Independent Election Commission, and helping school children prepare for exams over the period of a month. Others have changed jobs completely and/or taken on new challenges.

The following features of the Certificate course would appear to contribute to the students' success:

- Course modules that are informed by local community needs.
- The values reflected in the methodology for the course: an approach to learning that is participatory, critical, dialogic, research-oriented and activist has been a powerful catalyst for students to act (see further Chapter 3, section 8.1). Interviews reflect the same participatory and consultative approach by students working in communities.
- Confidence gained from practical assignments, which required students to demonstrate their competence in their own contexts. This was mentioned frequently.
- A strong emphasis on evaluation and that reflection is evident in students' ability to reflect on the changes in their own practices: 'My way of working is now totally changed because in the past I was just motivating people, teaching them about health and a person had just to accept or reject an idea, that's all. I'm now different. I'm able to change some perceptions that people have and I can relate to anybody at everybody's level' (female student, Department of Health, 31/10/00). A weakness of the research is that interviews did not often specifically ask students to reflect on their own strengths and weaknesses or on the reasons for their success and failures. Significant evidence of reflective practice is thus lacking.
- Attention to the critical cross-field outcomes set by the NQF (see Appendix 6). These outcomes run through all learning on the course; the students' performance as development workers points to the validity of these outcomes nationally. The outcome 'Demonstrate an understanding of the world as a set of related systems by recognising that problem-solving contexts do not exist in isolation' is particularly evident in the work of students in the Department of Health.

While the combination of modules seems to have been particularly successful, the module on ***Organising Skills*** seems essential for adult educators. It has significantly enhanced students' impact, both in public adult learning centres, where it assists managers to run centres efficiently and facilitators to recruit and mobilise learners, and in wider community development work, where it has enabled students to strengthen a variety of structures and organisations and in several cases to take up leadership positions.

The challenge remaining is to find ways to harness the power of the Certificate curriculum to further transform public adult learning centres: to ensure that courses offered support learners' participation in income-generating projects and wider development processes.

How successfully has development been linked in the work of alumni? (research question 4)

All but 16% of Certificate students are involved in their communities in some way. Many students started with some experience in community organisations and therefore a prior orientation towards social goals, but this figure is nonetheless a testimony both to the personal qualities and commitment of the students and to the Certificate course. Students are involved in every possible aspect of development from income-generation to environmental justice. Many play multiple roles.

Were the ideas and intentions appropriate for the environment – both social and educational – of students on the course? (research question 5)

This question is answered by an analysis of the overall impact of the course.

Educational impact

Students have managed to pass on their skills to at least 200 learners in small businesses and to a much larger number of people through their involvement in community organisations. Two students are involved in fund-raising to enable matriculants to study further so that they can pass on the benefits they have received.

The networks created by the Certificate course are still sustained as problem-solving and morale-boosting support systems and form an important part of their contribution to learning.

The Multi-Purpose Community Centre model to be piloted in De Aar in 2002 would allow scope for increased educational impact in ABET. CACE students demonstrate many of the skills necessary for responsive, flexible provision, for example, research and needs analysis, organising, designing and evaluating learning events with development potential. (However, see Chapter 4 for a discussion of the limited impact of the Certificate course in relation to literacy training and linking literacy to development.)

Social impact

The personal impact on students is discussed in Chapter 3 and earlier in this chapter. Indicators of impact on the well being of their communities include:

- improved health and nutrition, especially of mothers and children;
- people mortality rates;
- greater awareness of health choices, especially among mothers and teenagers;
- organisational development – community structures with a better understanding of democratic procedures and principles;
- more accountable organisations, for example, school governing bodies, local development forums; and
- greater participation in decision-making about development processes (students in the Department of Social Services and Health and in local government).

A longer checklist of indicators is appended to this chapter (see Table 5.3).

Socio-economic impact

The ***Training Small Business Developers*** module, introduced in the second cycle, has had a significant impact on students' communities. Apart from the thirteen successful small businesses, students have assisted with countless business plans for schools, poverty alleviation projects, local government initiatives, and so on. In this way they have been instrumental in bringing much needed resources into their communities.

Of the students involved in small business projects, 72% were in rural areas and 65% were female; of these female students all but one were in rural areas. While not all the projects are likely to be sustainable, this evidence points to a large role being played by women in building the economic security of rural communities.

Other students have contributed to the earning potential of others through skills training and job creation projects. Fund-raising and savings schemes are other indicators of positive economic activity. The majority of initiatives are geared to the unskilled and unemployed.

Many projects are constrained by the lack of macro-economic development in towns such as Noupoort and Victoria West. One project on its own is not sufficient to change patterns of cash flow without a larger pool of job opportunities. Yet students in these situations persist, adapting their ideas and seeking new and creative solutions.

Those students in leadership positions in local government hold great potential for making resources available to those most in need. As several of them were only elected in November 2001, it is too soon to see the results.

Socio-political impact

Many CACE students were appointed to help with the local elections in November 2001 (making it very difficult to interview them). Two students claim that their appointment was because they became known as good organisers since completing the Certificate. One Certificate student speaks about how the Certificate course materials helped him in a situation where he was given only a day's training as preparation before training IEC voter registration officials: ' ... they gave me a day, a day's training, but I had my own ideas ... I had to use them, but as I say I have never thrown away my CACE materials. I always refer back to them if I have a problem, and I solve the problem' (male student, rural, De Aar region, 20/09/00).

Other students have run workshops with youth on human rights and the Constitution of South Africa.

Many contribute to participatory democracy through their involvement in political structures. Students in one small sheep-farming town attributed their anticipated victory in the local elections to CACE's teaching them to 'go to the people' (group interview, 21/09/00)[4]. The fact that these students put their energy into changing the political power base shows an understanding that the nature and extent of development possible depends on who has control over resources.

Once again the students who have recently moved into local government hold potential for consolidating democracy and improving the quality of governance. The process of political change is slow – many small towns are still in the grip of old power structures or plagued by factionalism, but in many cases where changes in leadership have occurred, there is a slow swing of economic resources towards previously marginalised communities.

Gender impacts

'I am empowered. I feel very strong as a woman. I can face any challenge.'
(translated from Afrikaans) (female Certificate student, Hartswater, 21/11/00)

In many of the communities in which past students are located, women play a major role in leadership. In some areas, this is partly because men can only earn an income as migrant labour and are therefore absent for long periods. Whatever the causes, in many communities it seems that women are taking on new political and economic responsibilities. In the Olifantshoek Local Council, for example, a majority of the councillors were women (five women as opposed to four men). One of the Certificate students was a candidate in the local elections for this council at the time of the interview.

CACE students are therefore able to take advantage of new opportunities, many of them breaking new ground. For example, one student is the first female mayor in her district.

All except one of the small businesses of which evidence was obtained involved only women. Seven sewing businesses are known to make a profit. A community vegetable garden, a laundry, a community shop, a bakery and a hair salon are other successful projects that feature women in key organisational roles.

Thirty-nine past women students are involved in various development initiatives and community organisations, six of them as initiators. These include some of the most successful and significant community projects in terms of their impact: the integrated nutrition programme, the community gardens projects, and the sewing projects. These are often singled out as specifically targeting women's empowerment, or as poverty alleviation projects. Many are linked to other initiatives in a cluster of projects. So, the poultry project is linked to an abattoir and to a chicken pie initiative; the integrated nutrition programme is linked to community gardens, which utilise tin can collecting as an innovative way to raise funds for those in need. There are at least four breastfeeding groups, several HIV/AIDS awareness programmes, and community health forums. There is also an anti-nuclear campaign in Namaqualand and several students involved in domestic violence issues. This is an impressive list.

Four students referred to the supportive role played by their husbands in enabling them to study and to take up jobs that require extensive travel. It may be that in some cases the new opportunities opened to CACE students through the course have contributed to a shift in gender roles[5].

The four women in local government provide role models for others and have a springboard from which to expand community organising to address local needs.

To what extent has curriculum material been of use to participants in their work or communities? (research question 2)

Several respondents talk about how they still refer to the course materials as a resource. In particular, students consistently mention the ***Organising Skills*** module, and the Participatory Rural Appraisal tool in the ***ABET for Development*** module.

What were the differences in impact between the 1997 and 1999 deliveries of the programme? (research question 6)

The addition of the ***Training Small Business Developers*** module to the 1998–9 cycle significantly increased the economic impact of CACE students.

The greater number of students from other sectors in this second cycle (see Table 3.2) also widened the impact of the course. Students from sectors such as Health demonstrate an ability to understand and implement integrated approaches to development that embrace many community needs and problems.

What training is still needed? (research question 8)

Students identify financial skills and a higher level of computer skills as the training most needed.

What have been the unintended consequences of the courses? (research question 9)

There have been no unintended consequences in the sense that the ripple effect of the course could not be predicted. However, the extent of students' success has often surprised the researchers and the partners.

5.1 Evaluation against indicators for effective development

In the ABET for Development module, a list of indicators for effective development is provided. We have used this same checklist (Table 5.3) to evaluate the work of past CACE students in their communities. Ticks are provided only when the evidence from interviews, questionnaires and observations appears to be overwhelmingly positive. A blank indicates not necessarily a negative, but an uncertain or mixed response, or that the issue remains for the time being in doubt.

Obvious differences exist from town to town and between students. We believe, however, that this research has established beyond reasonable doubt that CACE provision has resulted in a surprising level of contribution to development for many if not most of the individuals who have completed the Certificate course.

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Indicators of individual development[6]

The individual	
Can identify his/her own learning and development needs	✓
Can plan and monitor his/her own learning	✓
Can evaluate information critically	✓
Can find information which is relevant to his/her learning goals	✓
Can analyse causes of problems and assess solutions	✓
Has improved communication skills	✓
Has increased confidence	✓

Improved quality of life	
Actively participates in organisations in the community, at work and in wider development processes	✓
Interacts confidently with local, provincial and national institutions, e.g. government, business	
Can use information to fight for change	✓
Can understand and act on his/her rights	✓
Can help start development projects	✓
Can pass on information to the community and encourage them to participate in projects	✓
Can organise, run and chair meetings	✓
Understands the need for collective action and strong accountable organisations	✓
Shows increased self-reliance	✓
Has a critical awareness of power relations and his/her own position in society	✓
Can understand and challenge class, race and gender relations	
Can contribute to the improved quality of life in his/her family	✓

Indicators of socio-economic development	
Increase in income generating skills	✓
Reduced rate of unemployment	
Increased opportunities for employment	✓
People acquire skills needed in the labour market	
More people have the skills to set up, manage and sustain programmes	✓
People acquire knowledge and skills to get jobs and start income-generating projects	✓
Changes occur in the economic status of women	✓
Improved efficiency, health and safety at work and in communities	✓
People take advantage of new opportunities such as land reform, housing schemes	
The population becomes health literate and aware of their rights regarding health; can exercise choices regarding good health	
People contribute to prevention of diseases and improved levels of health	✓
More able to challenge privilege and exploitation	

Indicators of socio-political development	
Actively and critically participate in government decision-making processes at national, provincial and local levels	Only at local level so far
Active participation in community and workplace organisations	✓
Can develop strategic plans for dealing with problems	✓
Can promote and build strong organisational structures and lines of accountability	✓
Promote collective action and social mobilisation	
Challenge power relations in the family, local community organisations and wider society	
Take on leadership positions	✓
Women take increased control over family or community resources	✓

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Indicators of socio-cultural development	
Has critical awareness of environmental issues	✓ (two projects)
People acquire knowledge and skills which lower infant mortality rates	✓
Women actively and critically participate in local community and societal activities	✓
Increased awareness of gender issues, and conscious effort made to address them	✓
Women feel confident to take leadership positions in organisations	✓
Women are represented in decision-making structures in organisations	✓
Young people are able to acquire skills and knowledge to gain or create employment	
Young people feel confident and happy about their futures in the society	

Table 5.3 List of indicators for effective development

5.2 Recommendations

There appear to be at least two reasons why some past students are markedly more involved in their communities than others: first, the motivation and previous experience that each individual student brings to the course; and second, the contexts and the networks within which each student works after leaving the course. These findings would suggest the following:

- Greater attention should be paid to the motivation and experience of candidates for training and development courses. Nevertheless, a lack of experience in community work does not prevent many students from subsequently making significant contributions to development.
- The Department of Education should continue to promote the Certificate course in other sectors such as Health, Labour and Social Welfare: students in these sectors have shown the impact that sound training in adult education can have in promoting an integrated and participatory approach to development.
- Courses for ETDP practitioners should strengthen the abilities of students to critically analyse, engage with or challenge the social and political environments from which they come, and within which they intend to work.

Other recommendations are:

- The broad focus of the curriculum and supportive model of distance learning have been very successful and should be retained.
- The financial skills component of the ***Training Small Business Developers*** module should be strengthened or extended. This is important to a variety of structures and organisations in which students are involved and could enable an increase in the flow of funds to projects that can be seen to be well-managed and accountable.

- The ***Training Small Business Developers*** module should be offered to students from the 1996–7 cycle to increase the opportunities available to them.
- The Unit Standards for ABET (May 2000) should be evaluated against the needs of a multi-purpose community centre, for example: research skills, participatory needs analysis, organising and managing centres and learning groups etc., planning and evaluating learning programmes. The ABET Unit and CACE should prepare submissions to the Standards Generating Body on this basis. Organising skills would seem to be an essential component of practitioner training, given its importance in ABET and in development contexts.
- The ABET Unit should explore ways for ABET provision to support developments initiated by communities or other sectors.

6 CASE STUDIES: NOUPOORT AND CARNARVON

Summary

The two case studies are part of a broader process of tracing the impact of the CACE/Department of Education capacity-building project. The following is a summary of the key findings. Not all factors apply to both towns.

Key factors in attracting and keeping learners in ABET centres are:

- the acquisition of functional literacy skills (post Level 1);
- extra-curricular information from facilitators on accessing rights and services
- the space provided by the ABET group for learners to vent their feelings on community issues;
- learners' involvement in small businesses;
- learners' involvement in structures such as learning centre governing bodies; and
- evidence that some other learners have become successful and have found work.

Key factors inhibiting CACE students' impact on ABET:

Institutional factors:

- policies and budget limitations, which keep most Advanced Diploma graduates from working in adult learning centres;
- competing visions for ABET between the Department of Education and CACE students, between 'schooled' literacy and a more development-oriented approach;
- the lack of a coordinating structure to enable consultation and communication between grassroots ABET workers and provincial levels of ABET;
- the lack of pedagogical support for educators;
- the limited ABET budget, which impacts negatively on the learning environment and learning resources; and

- the fact that some learners are unintentionally excluded from adult learning centres through factors such as language, gender, age and disability.

Professional factors

- facilitators do not have enough practical literacy teaching skills;
- facilitators are not sufficiently equipped to create learning programmes linked to development needs; and
- there is insufficient networking with other ABET professionals: students in these towns have not linked themselves with colleagues in the region.

Contextual factors

- in Carnarvon, factionalism and power struggles between and within communities have led to suspicion and lack of trust, which stifles initiative;
- students' political identity seems to impede their attempts to recruit learners from some communities; and
- the social stigma associated with illiteracy in some communities is a barrier to recruitment.

Key factors inhibiting students' impact on development

Institutional factors

- the lack of a tangible link between ABET and income-generating skills; and
- learning materials for ABET Level 1, which do not cover development-related issues such as human rights, health, access to resources and services, or other skills and knowledge for participatory democracy.

Contextual factors

- a very weak macro-economic context and the lack of an inclusive development plan for either town; and
- divided communities in Carnarvon mean that employment in development projects depends on students' relationship to those in power.

Personal and professional factors

- Advanced Diploma students generally have secure employment and are not driven by the same imperatives as Certificate students to become involved in development initiatives; and

- the content of the Advanced Diploma course does not tie adult education as closely to community development as the Certificate.

Aspects that merit further consideration in the light of this study:

Institutional aspects

- developing a broad common vision among all stakeholders, based on a shared understanding of ABET and development that links adult education, literacy and economic and social development;
- proclaiming ABET publicly as a non-partisan project, beyond party politics, race, or ethnic divisions;
- creating local resourced, transparent coordinating structures with mechanisms for consultation and conflict resolution;
- developing an ABET plan that is based on participatory analysis of community needs and assets and possibilities for sustainable livelihoods;
- developing a clear, prestigious identity for adult learning centres through programmes of interesting community activities and short courses which offer immediately useful knowledge;
- exploring the potential of family literacy, which can be a creative solution to the issue of insufficient child care;
- using the untapped potential of Advanced Diploma students to run workshops or short courses at adult learning centres;
- offering technical ('hard') skills training to learners at ABET Levels 1 and 2 as well as at higher levels;
- exploring mechanisms for accessing funds for 'hard' skills in adult learning centres; and
- exploiting the relationship that seems to exist between involvement in income-generating projects and motivation for ABET (see also Chapter 5).

Professional aspects

- ensuring transparent selection processes;
- equipping Cluster Programme Managers to offer pedagogical support to facilitators;
- sustaining networks of those involved in ABET to help people to learn from experiences elsewhere;

- ensuring that courses for ABET practitioners contain an understanding of development theory and practice as well as ideas and practices that integrate ABET provision with development and practical business skills;
- ensuring that courses for ABET practitioners nurture a sense of social responsibility in students; and
- setting up processes to ensure that training courses provided for adult educators meet the development agenda for the province.

1. INTRODUCTION

In 1996, the Department of Education (ABET Division) of the Northern Cape embarked on a capacity-building project to make adult education and training available to marginalised communities in the region. As a practical part of fulfilling the project's objectives, the Centre for Adult and Continuing Education (CACE) at the University of the Western Cape (UWC) was given the task of training community workers and others from the Northern Cape as adult educators, trainers and facilitators at Certificate and Advanced Diploma levels. The CACE courses aimed to enable these students to work as ABET facilitators in their communities and so to contribute to the development of the Department of Education's capacity to provide ABET in the region.

The two case studies that follow are part of a broader process of tracing the impact of the project. The purpose of the case studies, which were written by a team of writers, is to describe and compare the provision of ABET in two different communities and to try and identify some of the necessary ingredients for success. In both instances we have tried to locate the relative success or failure of ABET provision within a broader contextual analysis of the towns as sites for social and economic development. We have also tried to analyse to what extent ABET has contributed to development in the surrounding community.

After the first set of interviews conducted in research sites across the province Noupoort and Carnarvon were chosen for the following reasons:

- they are both small rural towns with struggling economies;
- in Noupoort, there are two well-attended adult learning centres; in Carnarvon, despite many attempts no adult learning centre is currently in operation. The former seemed to be fairly typical of ABET provision in many other small rural towns; the latter an extreme case;
- in Noupoort, there are a large number of past CACE students; mainly from the Advanced Diploma (ten) but also four Certificate students: we wished to establish whether this fact had had any particular impact on ABET provision or on broader development in the town; and
- in Carnarvon, there are ten past Certificate students, among them some of the best performers on the course. Another student took the Advanced Diploma course and acted as tutor for the Certificate group. We wanted to find out why these students had not been able to sustain ABET classes.

In each case the first set of interviews was followed by a second more in-depth set with the same students. In addition, interviews were conducted with community leaders, ABET learners and a Cluster Programme Manager (in the site where there were ABET centres) as well as the regional coordinator.

The interviews for both case studies took place between September 2000 and January 2001. Specific dates have not always been included with the quotes in the case studies.

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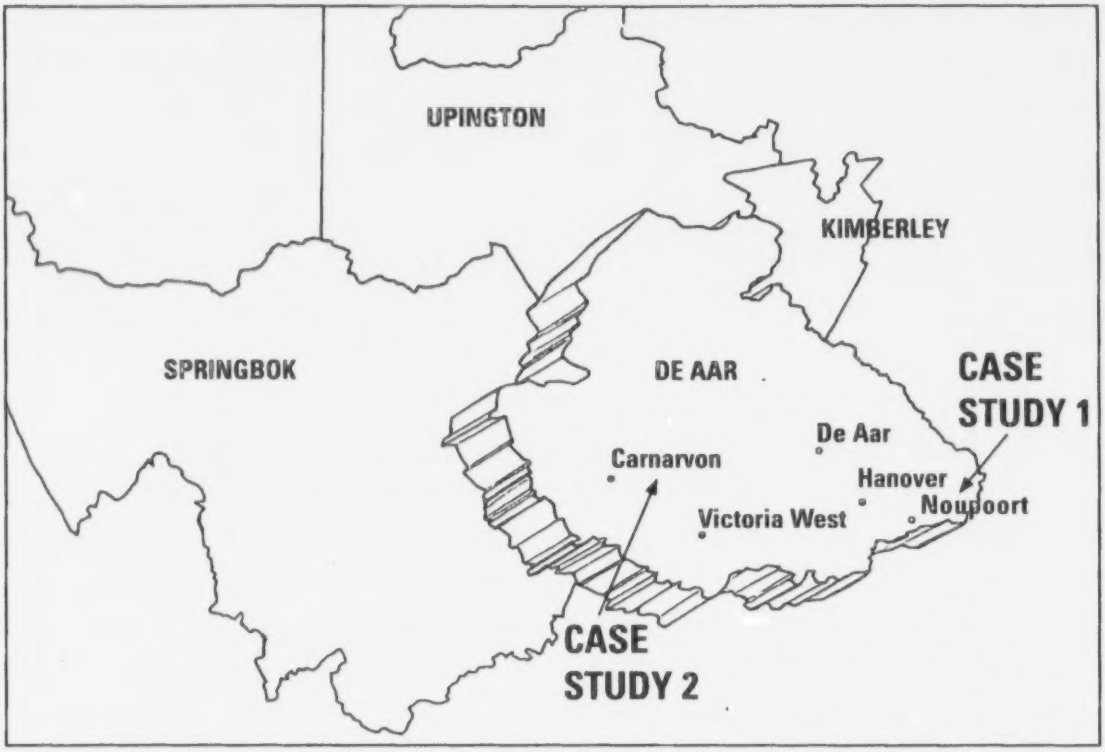

Map 6.1 Noupoort and Carnarvon are located in the De Aar region of the Northern Cape.

2. NOUPOORT – CASE STUDY 1

> *'There is no progress. There is no everything. Noupoort is a dying place. I can say there is no development [and] I don't know how I can explain that. The rate of economy in Noupoort is very, very low: there are no jobs ... even the hawkers themselves do not have a real income ... So we know money is everything and there can be no development if we don't have money.'*
>
> (CACE student, Noupoort)

Fourteen students from Noupoort registered for the Advanced Diploma and Certificate courses over the four-year span of the partnership between the Department of Education and CACE. This case study begins with an overview of the social, economic and political context of Noupoort, then goes on to describe the work of past CACE students in ABET and development. It ends with an analysis of the reasons for the students' relative lack of impact on ABET and the small number of development initiatives in which CACE students are involved.

2.1 The context

2.1.1 Social geography

Noupoort is a small town located in the De Aar region of Northern Cape province, bordering on the Eastern Cape. It is at the end of a railway line that is no longer in use.

In 1991, South African Railways and Harbours – the main employer in the town – began to wind down its operations and eventually closed the railway depot. According to a senior community leader, this caused 60 to 70 members of the African community in Noupoort to lose their jobs (interview, 11/12/00).

Until 1991, Noupoort was a relatively prosperous town; now its inhabitants struggle to survive. Once the depot had closed, many people left the town to find work, moving to larger, more established towns such as Middelburg and Colesberg. By 1996/7, when CACE first offered its courses in the Northern Cape, the working population of Noupoort had significantly decreased. With the departure of most young people to seek work, many households in Noupoort today survive only because of pension and welfare grants.

The social geography of Noupoort has remained more or less unchanged since the apartheid era: the predominantly Xhosa-speaking African population lives in the township of KwaZamuxolo, while the largely Afrikaans-speaking, coloured community lives in Eurekaville. The white population lives nearest the centre of town. (There are, however, three residential areas where members of all races live.) ABET classes are also racially divided, with Noupoort adult learning centre serving the African community and Protea adult learning centre serving the coloured community (see Map 6.2).

2.1.2 Political and economic structures

There has been little economic growth since the elections took place in 1994. Economic power still lies in the hands of the white community, although since 1994 the formal locus of political power has shifted to the African National Congress (ANC) and Democratic Alliance (DA). The white community is described as consisting of farmers and ex-employees of the railways: '... the stubborn type that still wants to cling to the old regime. They don't easily accept the development and they make it known ... that they don't accept change' (community leader, group interview, 11/12/00).

Unemployment is high and there is little cash flow or buying power. Some attempts have been made to get income-generating projects off the ground, but as small businesses depend on the impoverished local community for support or patronage, none so far has been successful in making a profit at a sustainable level.

Attempts have been made to get all three communities to work together in the Local Development Forum but 'the whites never attended the Forum' (ibid.). Attempts to involve white residents in other projects failed because:

> *'[white participants] felt they couldn't wait for their income, it was waiting too long so they just drop out ... some of the coloured communities are better involved and we are trying ... so we could make a breakthrough, we could get the community to play as one then the whites, brown and black together - we go together.'*
>
> (church leader, ibid.)

While African and coloured communities are beginning to cooperate, relationships with the white community are still often characterised by exclusion and distrust. Spoornet allegedly hires its buildings for free to white members of the town but, when approached by members of the African community, told them that the rate would be R1 000 a month (ibid.). The controversial Noupoort drug rehabilitation centre run by the white Christian Community Church similarly views people who approach them 'as ... against what they [the Church] are doing' (ibid.) A local church leader commented: 'You can say it's a Noupoort centre, but it's not for Noupoort' (ibid.). The centre buys none of its goods in Noupoort and none of the profit finds its way into the Noupoort economy. The Centre is also alleged to pay exploitative wages (ibid.).

There are not many formally established organisations and, apart from the newly established local council, none that can claim to represent, or to be concerned with, all of Noupoort's citizens. Key organisations are the ANC, which has the greatest support base, and the churches:

'Most of the communities are ANC supporters that's the only organisation [that] is strong ... You find we only have three churches involved. If all the churches ... can come together to form a community structure, those are the two community structures that can be strong. You can see the potential is there.'

(church leader, ibid.)

The new local council elected in November 2000 has a strong ANC support base, with seven out of ten councillors being ANC members, but at the time of writing it was not yet clear what impact this will have on development.

2.1.3 Gender roles

Women are described by two respondents as dominating development projects and taking on key leadership roles. An explanation offered by one respondent is that a large migrant male population follows whatever employment opportunities become available. Of the seven new ANC councillors, four – including the mayor – are women. One interview suggests an undertone of resentment about the role of women in the town: 'women are not always steady people - they always like to grab first, whatever it is. They like to grab things first' (different church leader, ibid.).

Yet, a CACE student who plays an active role in community initiatives describes her relationship with her family in a surprisingly traditional way: 'Because CACE has helped me, I know other people's needs. I have to respect them and my family too. I know how to look after my kids and my husband' (26/11/00). She also notes that patriarchal family structures make it difficult for women to attend ABET classes: 'it is very important to obey the culture ... some fathers don't want their wives to arrive late at home' (facilitator lesson description, 11/12/00).

There are obvious tensions around gender roles in Noupoort. Women have to re-evaluate and renegotiate the traditional expectations of themselves as wives and mothers in the light of their roles as learners and community leaders. This situation, not unusual elsewhere, is perhaps more difficult in a small and isolated community like Noupoort.

2.1.4 Development initiatives

The projects mentioned in interviews include poultry farming, sewing and more recently a chemicals production project.

The poultry project

The poultry project is a community-initiated income-generating project for women. It was initiated towards the end of 1997 with a grant from South African Breweries, which also provided some initial training in Small Medium and Micro-Enterprise (SMME) skills development. Although this project does not yet make a profit, it has survived for three years and was still running at the end of 2000.

Initially, 40 women came together to decide on and set up the project; in November 2000, when interviews took place, 21 women were still involved. The extent to which the project is fully participatory is not clear. One respondent suggests that the reason so many dropped out was the project's inability to generate income for participants in its early phase.

Among the explanations offered for the project's problems are: insufficient buying power in the community; lack of a transport infrastructure and depots for feed which mean that expensive private trucks have to be hired regularly to fetch chicks and feed; and a limited market for live chickens: 'As it is we couldn't make much profit because we had to sell live and that's another reason for the limited market that most of our businesses and our people want ready-made, want pre-packed meat and so on, so we intend changing to the self-slaughtering' (manager of Sikhulule Chicken Enterprise, 11/12/00). Members plan to make and sell chicken pies as well. An abattoir was planned for the end of 2000.

The sewing project

This project involves seven women, all of whom attend the Noupoort adult learning centre. They manage to generate a small income but their potential to reach a bigger market is inhibited by a lack of marketing skills and the need for more professional knowledge of design (community leader, 11/12/00).

The chemicals manufacturing project

This recently developed project involves manufacturing various detergents and cleaning agents, for example, the equivalent of Handy Andy, and will create 100 jobs. It is an initiative of the Youth Commission; later the community negotiated that jobs should be available to all members of the community. It is also part of the Economic Enablement Initiative (EEI) of the Northern Cape Province, as Noupoort is identified as a 'poverty area'. The project is 'not financially supported by the Department of Labour or anyone' (unrecorded discussion with businessmen responsible for reviewing CVs, 11/12/00). Matric is a pre-requisite for employment and there are no plans to link this project to ABET. Target workers, who will do manual labour, are youth, women and disabled people. The project may be benefiting by getting access to buildings from Spoornet, and the government has signed a contract to buy their detergents. Road transport will be used.

2.2 The interview sample

Altogether 14 CACE students originate from Noupoort. In 1996 ten students registered for the Advanced Diploma, three of whom did not complete the course. There was one Certificate student in the first cycle (1996–7), and three in the second cycle (1998–9), one of whom did not complete the course. Researchers interviewed eight of these fourteen students, four Advanced Diploma and four Certificate students (including two who did not complete the course). All students are first language speakers of isiXhosa.

Other informants were: a Cluster Programme Manager, Rev. Raymond Luyatsha of the Ethiopian Church of South Africa, Mr Moses Myekeni Thibane, newly elected Councillor for the Towerberg Municipality and Mrs Edith M T Ramnewana who is manager of the Sikhulule Chicken Enterprise and is also a pastor of the Christ the King Ministries. The local social worker was included in these interviews but had only that month moved into Noupoort from Carnarvon and felt that she was still feeling her way around (researcher's report, 11/12/00).

2.2.1 Previous and current employment

Six of the eight students were involved in education before they registered for the CACE courses. The Advanced Diploma students were formal schoolteachers, three of whom also taught ABET at night. Of the Certificate students, one was an ABET facilitator and one was a pre-school teacher. Since completing the courses, seven of the eight are still involved in education. However, the four Advanced Diploma graduates now only teach in schools and are not involved in ABET at all. Three of the four Certificate students are still involved in ABET. These three students all improved their job situation because of the course.

2.2.2 Completion

All four Advanced Diploma students interviewed completed the course. Two Certificate students completed, and two did not: one female, and one male. The female student had dropped out of the course after she was made a Cluster Programme Manager, moved to De Aar and had to travel extensively. Later, the number of Cluster Programme Managers was reduced and she was made redundant, so she decided to complete her Certificate in 2001. The male Certificate student did not complete because he joined an RDP building project midway through the year, but he also is keen to finish his studies. Job opportunities are scarce and take precedence over studying.

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2.2.3 Gender

Two of the eight CACE students are men. One registered for the Certificate, the other for the Advanced Diploma; neither is currently involved in ABET. The women in this sample are more active in both community and ABET contexts.

2.3 ABET provision in Noupoort

Despite the poverty and lack of economic growth, two ABET centres are well established in Noupoort. Up to 170 learners are listed as attending classes at the two centres on a regular basis, although attendance fluctuates and in winter there are fewer learners.

Noupoort adult learning centre in KwaZamuxolo African township has been running since before 1996. The Protea adult learning centre in the coloured township of Eurekaville was established in 1998 by a former CACE student who now works for the Department of Education. This latter centre is attended mostly by Afrikaans-speaking adults but the facilitators have a mix of language backgrounds (regional coordinator, 17/01//01).

There has been a steady growth in learner numbers at the lower levels of ABET, for example at Level 1, from 20 in 1998 to 32 in 2000 at Noupoort adult learning centre (see Table 6.1).

		1998				2000				2000	
		Reg	RExam	P	R	Reg	RExam	P	R	Pass rate	Throughput rate
Noupoort Adult Learning Centre	Level 1	20	10	–	–	32	19	16	3	84%	50%
	Level 2	25	9	–	–	25	15	8	7	53%	32%
	Level 3	–	20	–	–	17	16*	0	–	0%	0%
	Level 4	21	–	–	–	19	15*	0	–	0%	0%
Protea Adult Learning Centre	Level 1	20	2	–	–	20	13	10	3	77%	50%
	Level 2	20	7	–	–	17	9	9	0	100%	53%
	Level 3	21	1	–	–	26	24*	6	–	25%	23%
	Level 4	–	–	–	–	0	0	0	0	n/a	n/a

Table 6.1 Learner enrolment and throughput rates for PALCs in Noupoort[1]

KEY:

Reg = Registered for the course
RExam = Registered for exam
P = Pass
R = Retry
– = no information available

Notes:

1. At Levels 1 and 2, Pass and Retry rates are calculated only on mother-tongue courses.

2. Figures marked *: These students were examined on two or three courses. No student at Level 3 or 4 in the Noupoort centre passed the year. Six students at Level 3 in Protea passed the year. Pass and Retry rates for each subject have not been calculated.

3. No student at Level 3 or Level 4 in Noupoort, 2000, passed more than one course, even if registered for two or three. It is striking that most learners at all levels managed to complete only one course during the year even if they registered for two or more. This indicates the difficulties adult learners experience in trying to complete any level in one year and needs to be made explicit to learners on registration.

Detailed statistics on pass and throughput rates were not available until 2000. Retention rates are not yet available. However, both Noupoort and Protea centres show above average throughput rates at Level 1.

2.3.1 CACE students in ABET centres

CACE students are only employed at Noupoort centre and the case study therefore focuses on this centre. Two CACE students teach at this centre and one other was a Cluster Programme Manager (CPM) for the centre until the end of 2000.

While it is striking that only the Xhosa-speaking members of Noupoort applied to study with CACE, this can be explained by the fact that only the Noupoort adult learning centre was operating at the time when the courses were first offered and the Protea centre opened after the second cycle of courses began. No Afrikaans-speaking members of the community were formally involved in ABET at the time.

There was, however, some unhappiness that educators were brought in from De Aar and Colesberg for the Protea centre in 2000. Community leaders felt these jobs could have been filled by Noupoort educators – and that the jobs were not well advertised (group interview, 11/12/00).

2.4 Noupoort adult learning centre

2.4.1 Location

Noupoort adult learning centre is attached to Ntakohlaza primary school. It is well-situated in terms of access from surrounding predominantly African residential areas. It also provides opportunities – as yet unexploited – for income-generating projects and skills training attached to the centre, for example, the farmers' plots next door and the day clinic. It is not far from the central business district or the railway line, which still acts as a junction for long distance trains (Johannesburg, Port Elizabeth and Cape Town). There is electricity and piped water (see Map 6.2).

2.4.2 ABET provision

Noupoort offers all four ABET levels, that is, there is provision for those who have had little or no formal schooling up to the equivalent of the General Education and Training Certificate (Grade 10). In 2000, Level 1 modules on mother-tongue literacy (isiXhosa) were offered; at Level 2 mother tongue (isiXhosa) and English; at Levels 3 and 4, English, Natural Science and Health and Social Science. No Numeracy or Maths modules were offered in 2000.

2.4.3 Learners at Noupoort centre

Enrolment and throughput rates

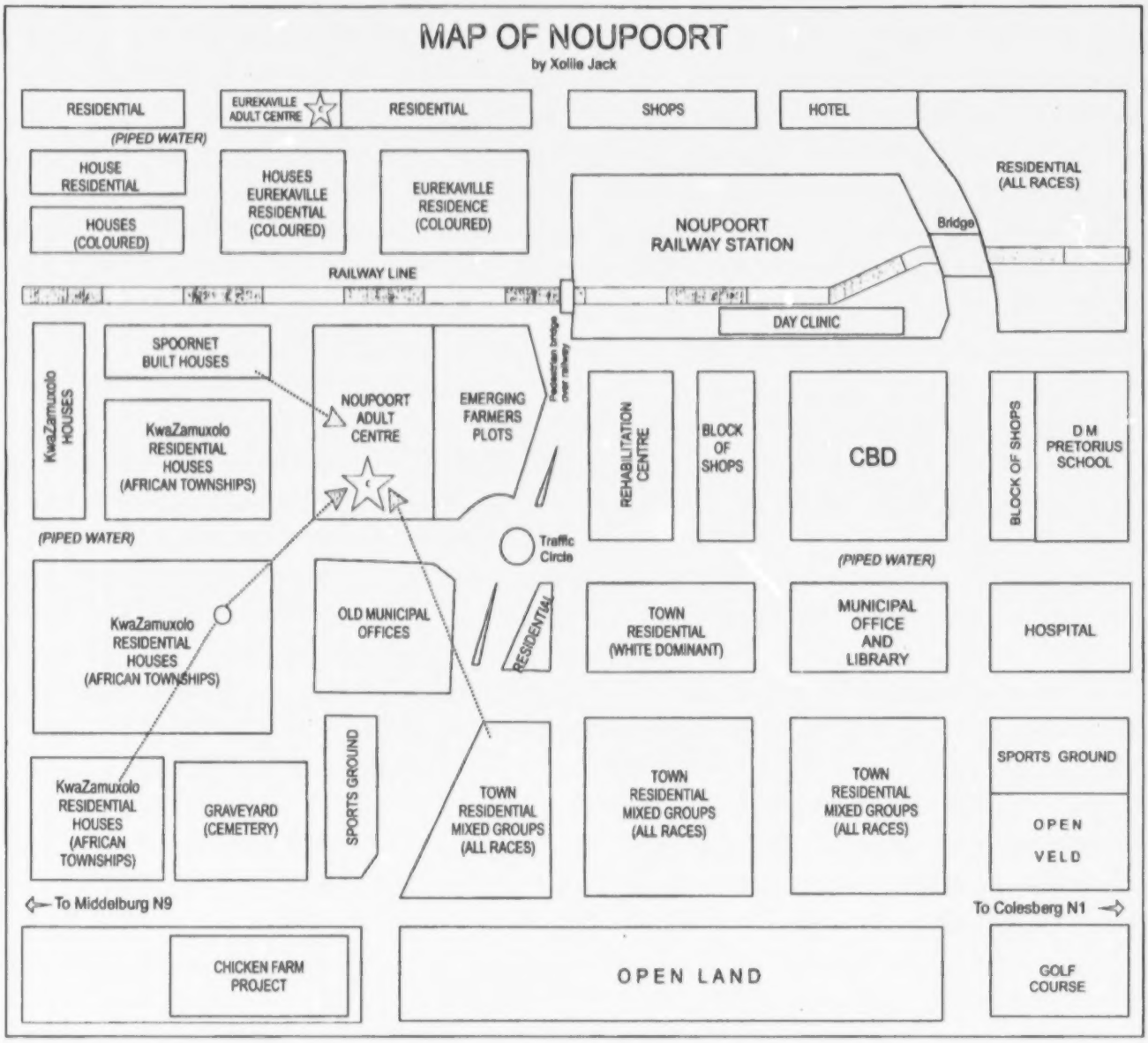
In September 2000, the numbers of learners at each level were: 27 (Level 1), 21 (Level 2), 26 (Level 3), 27 (Level 4). In the De Aar region, this more or less equivalent spread over levels is the norm in 75% of centres (statistics in Report of De Aar region, September 2000) (see endnote 1).

The Northern Cape regional statistics for enrolment by gender show a ratio of women to men of 5:1 (ibid.). Gender statistics for Noupoort are only available for 1999. Interestingly, they do not follow this pattern except at Level 4. At Levels 1 and 2 the ratio of women to men is 2:1, at Level 3 the numbers are equal. The perception that women far outweigh men at the centre is therefore inaccurate, or was for 1999. The much higher proportion of women at Level 4 is particularly interesting; common sense assumptions that women cluster at the lower levels are ill-founded in this case. Two possible reasons for this are the size of the community and age factors. The number of women interested in ABET Levels 1 and 2 may be lower than normal because the community itself is relatively small. Secondly, it is possible that women learners at the higher levels are considerably younger than those at Levels 1 and 2: although this was not established for Noupoort, this is the case at centres in Upington and Barkly West where the numbers of women at Level 4 are made up of very young women who dropped out of school because of teenage pregnancies.

One likely explanation for the low numbers of men at Level 4 is that men who have seven or more years of schooling (or ABET Level 3) are likely to have sought jobs outside of the stagnant economy of Noupoort. Those men who stay in Noupoort may have less education and are probably older. Further research would be necessary to obtain a fuller understanding of these patterns. It would also be interesting to track the numbers of learners who move through the system to emerge with a Level 4 certificate.

The throughput rate at Level 1 is 50% and 32% at Level 2. There are no statistics on repetition rates so efficiency rates cannot be calculated. Dropout rates for Levels 1 and 2 average 40% at Noupoort adult learning centre. Dropout rates in the province as a whole range from 30% to 50%, sometimes more (ABET Unit, assessment entries, 2000 – finals). Noupoort centre is thus representative of the provincial trends in this regard. According to the regional coordinator, women 'hold the fort in ABET' in Noupoort – they are less likely to drop out (17/01/01).

Many learners at the lower levels drop out in May/June and then re-register at the beginning of the year. To keep numbers at the required level of 20 per group, the Department tries to encourage Level 1 learners to join in the middle of the year (regional coordinator, 17/01/01).



Map 6.2 Map of Noupoort (not done to scale)

Experiences of the centre

A group of seven learners at different levels was interviewed in isiXhosa and Afrikaans. These learners were made up as follows: one woman at Level 1 who started in 2000 (the year of the interview); one woman at Level 2 who started in 1999; three women at Level 3 who started in 1997, 1995 and in an unspecified year in the 1980s; and at Level 4 one woman who started in 1994 and one nineteen-year-old man who started in 1997. It is important to note that as only one Level 1 learner participated in this interview, most of the outcomes noted by learners apply to higher levels of ABET.

Learners gave various reasons for attending the centre: some decided to come because those who studied in the centre before them are successful in finding work, for example, one is now a CPM. However, successes like this are rare and learners feel that others stay away 'because they do not see people coming out successful' (group interview, 11/12/00). (See *Reasons for dropouts or lack of interest* on the next page). One learner has a leadership position in the church and wants to read the Bible

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herself; many feel cheated with money; others want to read their letters and other documents for themselves as they feel interpreters do not actually say what the person has written. Others wish to complete Std 10 (Grade 12) as they feel this is the only way they will get jobs. These are all familiar motivations for adult learners.

Learners express satisfaction with their classes, saying that they learn what they came to learn: 'sums, to read Xhosa mother-tongue literacy and English words and stories' (ibid.). They also learn about health issues: 'HIV/AIDS and high blood pressure and general knowledge that affects their lives like where to go for help, e.g. for child grants and pensions'. Other things mentioned were Adult Learners' Week, Mother's Day and Women's Day and 'how to prepare for these days' (researcher's report, 28/11/00). Outcomes identified by learners across ABET levels include:

- deposit and withdraw money from the bank – one of the facilitators recalls seeing a municipal worker who had been in an ABET group helping others to fill in forms in the bank (interview, 26/11/00);
- write their names, surnames and home addresses;
- write letters;
- read the Bible;
- place an order of books with the publishers;
- excellent reading and writing in isiXhosa;
- health and safety issues that assist them in their lives; and
- feel more confident and happy about what they learnt.

Skills learnt in ABET classes that help learners in their work include: reading orders; to budget and market the project through the SMME module (ABET Level 4); and the confidence to work with those who are better educated than themselves in the poultry project. Some learners feel that they still lack the skills to read and write forms; others still struggle with reading and writing English. They would also like to learn computer and driving skills.

In ABET learning groups, learners have discussed issues such as 'their households, joblessness, the future of their children in light of the HIV/AIDS epidemic and drug and alcohol abuse; the stoppage of the sick and child support grants; lack of household items like food; ... the lack of confidentiality in the clinic and the doctor who doesn't care for patients' health' (ibid.). While some of these issues have been raised in community meetings, nothing further has transpired. Nevertheless, learners also feel that 'the centre is relieving to them because they vent their frustrations and share their problems (ibid.)'.

Learners find their facilitators responsive, encouraging and willing to assist. However, since a facilitator was present during the interview, concerns relating to teaching or content may not have been aired.

Reasons for dropouts or lack of interest

Learners suggest the following reasons why other people do not come to the centre: they do not see other ABET learners 'coming out successful'; elderly learners struggle to climb stairs to the first floor; and 'laziness'. Other reasons for dropouts or lack of interest identified by facilitators, the CPM for the area, the regional coordinator and community leaders are:

- lack of income-generating skills provided at the centre;
- freezing winter weather and lack of transport for older learners, especially in rainy weather;

- the increasing number of funerals in the area which learners need to attend (in other sites this situation is attributed to AIDS and this is no doubt also a factor here);
- lack of motivation due to pension problems;
- unemployment: learners have to go and look for jobs; others do seasonal work;
- insufficient learning materials;
- the fact that all the educators are women (the only male Certificate student was a builder and joined an RDP project);
- the perception that ABET is something that old people do: 'There are some [young people] who are supposed to come here for their education, but they just laugh, they take it as something for old people';
- because facilitators are young, older learners are shy to come to classes; and
- changes in staff: 'my father was used to the old teacher, but now since the staff is changed, he finds it difficult to come'.

(interviews, 26/11/00 and 11/12/00 and De Aar region Quarterly report, July–September 2000)

Suggestions for improvement

Learners suggest the introduction of social activities such as sports, concerts, choirs and braais (barbecues) to attract more learners; also 'learning through fun', using posters to advertise the centre, cabinets for their books, and a uniform for the centre. They feel the centre needs to be more like a school and would like a separate building decorated in a way that will attract others. (Researcher's report, 28/11/00).

Motivating factors

Factors that seem to play a motivating role in holding learners in ABET classes are:

- involvement in small businesses;
- involvement in structures such as centre governing bodies, which gives learners experience of leadership; and
- seeing some other learners become successful and find work.

2.4.4 Links between ABET and development

There are no formal links between ABET provision and wider development processes. However, three learners interviewed are involved in the poultry project (see section 2.1.4) and one of these is a member of the project committee. These learners have been involved since the beginning of the project. The poultry project did not grow directly as a result of CACE students' intervention, although the ***Training Small Business Developers*** module offered in the Certificate seems to have fed into the project at management level. Interestingly, those students who dropped out of the Certificate course consider the poultry project a failure, while those who completed the course consider that it still has development potential. There is also a sewing project opposite the school; seven of their members come to ABET classes. Both projects focus on enabling women to earn an income. The manager of the poultry project notes that at least seven of the ABET learners are members; while the impact of ABET classes seems limited so far ('they can count, they can write their names') it does make a difference (11/12/00).

The provision of ABET has had some impact on the organisational development of the learning centre itself and its accountability to learners: four learners are members of the governing body for the centre; one is the treasurer and sees her role as 'taking care of the centre's finances and trying to get everything the learners want'. The learners in the school governing body describe their role: 'to

represent the interests of learners and to see to the smooth running of the centres' (group interview, 11/12/00). These learners have been involved since the inception of the committee.

2.5 What factors affect the centre's ability to attract and keep learners?

2.5.1 Summary of positive features of ABET provision

The following features of ABET provision are valued by learners at Noupoort adult learning centre:

- the acquisition of functional literacy skills such as banking and writing letters: these skills give learners control over their own financial and personal lives and enable them to keep private information confidential (as only one Level 1 learner was present in this discussion, it is not possible to gauge the success of Level 1 provision in this regard);
- the 'space' provided by ABET classes for learners to discuss issues that concern them, even if these issues are not part of the curriculum (a facilitator without a sound understanding of adult learning is unlikely to provide such a space); and
- the extra-curricular information provided by facilitators about health issues and how to access grants, etc. which enables greater access to services.

2.5.2 Factors negatively influencing retention rates and interest in the centre

Respondents identified a mix of social, economic, institutional and personal factors influencing learners' interest in the learning centre. What learners (and some facilitators and community leaders in other sites) perceive as 'laziness' may disguise much deeper issues. Exclusion, whether real or felt, may operate through a variety of social factors:

- ***Language***: Learners of other language groups are not provided for at ABET Level 1. While the surrounding community is predominantly Xhosa-speaking, there are some mixed residential areas within its radius; the second centre in Eurekaville would be out of walking distance (see Map 6.2).

- ***Gender***: Gender may be a factor in keeping some men away from the centre: community leaders suggest that men who see that all the facilitators and most learners are women may hesitate to register. Many women are unable to attend because of family responsibilities and lack of childcare at the centre. Although some classes are held mid-afternoon rather than in the evening, patriarchal structures which control the movements of women require their presence in the home at specific times (facilitator lesson description, 11/12/00).

- ***Age***: Older learners cannot walk to the centre at night or in bad weather and some cannot manage the stairs. Some do not feel comfortable being taught by young facilitators.

- ***Disability:*** Disabilities, such as problems with eyesight, learning difficulties, or other forms of disability are not catered for.

- ***Political affiliation***: The learning centre is located in a predominantly ANC-affiliated community: this may mean that learners who do not share this political orientation may not feel comfortable approaching the centre. Moves by the Department to deracialise centre governing bodies and include representatives from all communities in these structures may be a partial solution, but recruitment strategies also need to address the issue by making it clear that learners will be welcomed regardless of race, language, gender or political affiliation. Learners' wish for a clear, positive identity for the centre, expressed in suggestions for a 'uniform' and decorated buildings

> could contribute to a vision that makes attendance a source of pride and prestige. A uniform, which at first glance seems to be reflecting a desire for 'schooled' learning, could be something like a T-shirt, promoting solidarity and a sense of belonging (CACE staff member, 25/01/01).

A second factor is the limited ABET budget which impacts on facilities and resources. This may affect the value that learners feel is placed on ABET by the Department and consequently the value that they place on attending the centre: it is extremely cold at night in winter and there is no money for heaters, there is no classroom especially for ABET so groups cannot leave their charts, posters, etc. on the walls, there is no storage space, and learning materials are not sufficient and/or appropriate.

A third set of factors relate to the extent to which ABET classes meet real learning needs. Although facilitators do ask learners what they need to learn, learning materials and institutional pressures to meet outcomes and pass exams do not lend themselves to learner-centred approaches. Learners were able to provide very few examples of how classes have helped them in their work (see section 2.4. 3 in this chapter) although this may also be because 85% of learners are unemployed (facilitator lesson description, 11/12/00). The lack of a tangible link between ABET classes and income-generating activities or possibilities, especially at ABET Levels 1 and 2, seems to be demotivating. As already noted, only a few learners manage to find jobs after attending ABET classes and others may therefore feel it is not worth the effort.

2.5.3 Factors hindering a closer relationship between ABET and development

- ***Institutional factors***: The learning materials in the centre for ABET Level 1 do not cover development-related issues such as human rights, health, access to resources and services, or other skills and knowledge for participatory democracy (see further Chapters 4 and 5). Information on HIV/AIDS has recently been made available at all centres but is not necessarily part of the curriculum. Small business skills are only offered at Level 4: other than this no income-generating skills are offered.

- ***Professional factors***: Facilitators are not sufficiently equipped to create learning programmes linked to development needs. This, however, requires a high level of skill and a range of intersecting competencies; it may be unreasonable to expect facilitators with only one or two years' training to do this without constant support and relevant resources.

- ***Contextual factors***: There is, as yet, no broad, inclusive plan for the development of Noupoort, to which ABET provision could be linked.

2.5.4 Factors that could enable closer links between ABET and development

There are some already existing factors that could be better used to contribute to a closer relationship between ABET and development. These include: the presence of CACE students with organising skills, small business skills and contextual understanding; the 'space' opened in ABET classes for discussion of critical community issues, which could provide a basis for acquiring knowledge and skills to address some of these issues; and the potential leadership abilities of ABET learners as shown in their representation on the school governing body and the poultry project committee. These existing strengths could be used to bring about some of the changes discussed below.

Community workers or facilitators have identified the following information and knowledge as important to address needs in the community: labour laws, maintenance grants, health issues, domestic violence, understanding local government, reading water or electricity bills, and small business skills. While learners' suggestions for improving their centre (see section 2.4.3) do not include the provision of short courses with this kind of content, it is possible they are limited by their

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understanding of what an 'adult school' can provide – schools are not traditionally associated with life skills training. However, offering such skills and information may swiftly change people's perceptions of the opportunities offered by adult learning and act as a magnet to attract learners to centres. This approach may also address a further issue: at present facilitators in all regions spend an enormous amount of time recruiting and re-recruiting learners all through the year. While this strategy does temporarily increase learner numbers (Cluster Programme Manager's Quarterly report, July–September 2000) and allows facilitators to motivate learners who might otherwise be hesitant to approach the centre, it would seem that the kind of courses offered, accompanied by a creative and inclusive advertising campaign, should be able to attract and keep learners. It should also be able to overcome issues related to the staff and learner profile: if skills offered are attractive enough and show real potential to impact on learners' lives, learners are less likely to find the age or gender of the facilitator and/or their co-learners a barrier to learning.

Currently, PALCs throughout the province provide general education programmes with hardly any training components. The ABET Unit is very conscious of this need and have initiated skills training in some centres in other regions. While at present many PALCs, located in existing schools, lack the necessary equipment and resources to develop technical skills, these skills are an essential component of the Unit's vision for the ABET system but only as part of post-literacy or ABET Levels 3–4 (Chief Education Specialist in Baatjes 2000:6). The findings of this research would suggest that the Multi-Purpose Community Centre planned for De Aar, seen as a pilot for an integrated education and training centre, should include technical skills training at ABET Levels 1 and 2. The high levels of unemployment in Noupoort and the province more generally would make technical skills training at the lower levels of ABET essential. For example, many skills such as agriculture, carpentry, or poultry care can be acquired by learners without high levels of literacy or any literacy at all. The National Qualifications Framework is intended as a mechanism to provide access even to those with little or no formal education: a lack of literacy skills should not exclude learners from other kinds of skills and knowledge.

In the case of Noupoort adult learning centre, a consultative process of research and analysis would enable the centre to plan courses or training opportunities that support other development initiatives and possibilities. Frameworks for conducting such a participatory process are offered by Scott-Goldman (2001) and Wetmore and Theron (1998). An approach to literacy skills development such as REFLECT (Archer and Cottingham 1996) in which literacy, numeracy and other skills grow out of and in turn sustain community-initiated development processes would seem well-suited to this process. (However, see Chapter 4 for a discussion of this methodology in relation to CACE training and current provision in PALCs.)

Sections 2.4 and 2.5 looked at ABET provision from the learners' point of view; sections 2.6 and 2.7 examine some of the reasons why the large numbers of CACE students in Noupoort have not resulted in significant impact, either in ABET provision, or in broader development processes.

2.6 CACE students in Noupoort adult learning centre

Department officials indicate that they feel CACE students in Noupoort work hard, show patience, are more successful in attracting learners and make adults happy to be in the centre. They also have a different facilitation style to other facilitators and use resources more creatively (regional coordinator, 17/01/01, CPM 03/12/00). The tutor of one student recalls that '...she's quite adventurous. She likes to explore, she always speaks out her mind. She likes to take challenges, so she's quite open ... the reason why she is in those classes is because she likes to learn, ... if she does not know something she will tell you "I'm going to make a research", and she will come back and give the answers to that, so ... the student is really confident' (tutor, 10/12/00).

The CPM for the centre, who is not a CACE graduate, points out that ABET facilitators who are qualified as formal school teachers earn more than CACE students, yet the latter are more committed,

some working uncomplainingly for three months while waiting for salary problems to be sorted out (03/12/00). She also finds that CACE students are more dynamic and independent, participate well in meetings and workshops, and strengthen the school governing bodies through their understanding of meeting procedures, business plans, etc. She notes that facilitators visit learners in their homes, motivate them and have a good understanding of their needs and situations. She suggests that facilitators could do with more counselling skills (ibid.).

Given this evidence of students' positive contributions to ABET, why have CACE courses not had greater impact on the form and content of ABET?

Noupoort has fourteen past CACE students, the highest number in any Northern Cape community, and with such a cluster of students at both Advanced Diploma and Certificate level, one would have expected to see significant transformation of ABET practice. We will discuss the two courses in turn.

2.6.1 Advanced Diploma students

Ten of the fourteen CACE students in Noupoort studied for the Advanced Diploma. Since none of them is still involved in ABET, this sizeable capacity is unused. There are several intersecting reasons for this state of affairs:

Planning and recruitment by the partners

All the students were accepted into the first course in 1996 as part of a general capacity-building strategy, but before the long-term plan for ABET in the province had been developed. In terms of the partnership agreement, these students were intended to become centre managers and trainers in ABET (as well as other sectors). Yet it was highly unlikely that a small town such as Noupoort could ever absorb ten high level graduates into the ABET system. One of the early ABET Unit staff members had raised this as an issue in relation to the Advanced Diploma more generally: 'I'm not sure that the intention ever was to train as many of them ... I also raised the issue of supply and demand, you know, if we say we want to create capacity, up to what level do we want to create capacity?' (25/09/00).

At the time of recruitment to the Advanced Diploma three of the students interviewed were already teaching in the Noupoort adult learning centre and two of these hoped to move into this area full-time. Advanced Diploma students enrolled for the course were motivated by an interest in ABET, but also by the lack of alternative opportunities in Noupoort and perhaps by fear of the retrenchment that was taking place in the formal schooling system.

New policies and laws

1996 saw the launch of the national government's literacy campaign, Ithuteng. This initiative was accompanied by an expectation that government would mobilise resources into adult education and that a large number of posts would be created. Although the first year of the campaign was slow, it started speeding up mid-year and large numbers were mobilised for 1997 (Ivor Baatjes, DFID Research dissemination conference, 17/04/01)

Yet, even when jobs did become available, Advanced Diploma students were not appointed. Students struggled to understand why newly qualified teachers or people without any training at all were employed instead of them. This situation arose because the Provincial Education Department, under pressure to create opportunities for unemployed teachers and school-leavers, implemented a 'one-teacher, one-job' policy in 1997 (see also Chapter 2, section 5.2.1). All those who were teachers in day schools and who, prior to this, were being prepared by the Department to participate in the Ithuteng campaign then became ineligible for ABET jobs.

A further fact was that, for the duration of the partnership between CACE and the ABET Unit, the employment of adult educators in public adult learning centres was linked to the Department of Education's 1997 Conditions of Service for Adult Educators which did not consider adult educators to be the same as school teachers. As a result, provinces could not employ adult educators on a long-term basis. In fact, there was no legal framework for the employment of adult educators until the end of 2000 (ibid.). Advanced Diploma students who wished to move into adult education therefore had to agree to nine-month contracts, with no guarantee of renewal. Few were in a position to sacrifice job security, despite their interest in ABET as a career.

Recognition and remuneration

Completing the Advanced Diploma did not qualify students for any increase in pay. The qualification was considered to be at the same level as their teaching diploma and therefore parallel to it rather than a notch higher. Students were very unhappy as they felt they had worked hard and received no formal or financial recognition for this. The Department, however, felt that students had already had full bursaries for the course and, as with any qualification, there could be no guarantee of a job.

> *'I think the ... levels of disgruntlement are probably higher amongst those that have done the Advanced Diploma because it's more difficult to place [on the pay scale] ... So you see we had [in the old system] with the new qualification comes a notch increase, you know. That's been very difficult to eradicate so when that was kicked out of the system, people still had this in their mind ... I used to get quite angry with some of these students: Number 1, they were privileged to be taken on the course, being fully sponsored; it didn't cost them a cent, and they were being personally developed and everything. And yet, they would expect that out of this must come a higher salary scale or permanent employment from the Education Department and things like that, you know. I just thought: Wow!'*
>
> (former ABET Unit staff member, 25/09/00)

In addition, owing to budgetary constraints, a ceiling was put on salaries for facilitators and those who did move into the uncertain and temporary employment offered by the adult learning centres were not paid at the level of their teaching qualification but had to accept lower rates.

In effect, CACE graduates who were teachers with extensive additional studies in adult education were excluded from participation in formal adult education programmes. This was a blow both to the students and to the capacity-building project as a whole.

Two Noupoort educators sum up the situation as follows:

> *'I will advise that person if they want to do that qualification [that] it is about development and empowerment. If you want to empower yourself you get a lot from CACE. I will advise that person if you are not talking about in terms of money, otherwise in terms of development it is okay.'*
>
> (group interview, 18/11/00).

> *'It is frustrating if you don't get money at the end of the day but sometimes it is not only the money that counts, it is the knowledge, the skills and the information. The information will last you forever but the money won't.'*
>
> (ibid.)

2.6.2 The Certificate

By contrast to the Advanced Diploma, two of the Certificate students interviewed have advanced in their ABET careers. They now hold supervisory positions in the Department of Education. One is a supervising facilitator in an ABET centre; another became a CPM for the De Aar region until the

end of 2000; ironically this student had to drop out of the Certificate to take up this position because so much travelling was involved. Here, unlike with the Advanced Diploma, there is a connection between taking a course and subsequent status and position. There has also been a (belated) financial recognition of the Certificate course. In 1996 and 1997, Certificate graduates teaching ABET were paid at level REQV11[2], whereas now they are at REQV12, a change that, to the Department's credit, was made ahead of the recognition of the course by the University of the Western Cape.

Course-related factors

As no Advanced Diploma students are employed in Noupoort adult learning centres, factors related to this course are only discussed in relation to development work in section 2.7 below.

The Certificate students in Noupoort follow the pattern observed in other sites of noticeably creative facilitation and democratic relationships with learners. However, no respondents note any significant change in the content of literacy classes or articulate a relationship between ABET and development needs in the community. As discussed in Chapter 4, the lack of impact by these students on the form and content of ABET can be attributed to insufficient time devoted to literacy teaching and learning programme design on the Certificate, an institutional environment which does not lend itself to learner-centred development-driven approaches, insufficient mentoring and pedagogical support, and a lack of appropriate materials for learners. Other factors relating to broader contextual issues are discussed below.

2.7 CACE students in development

Advanced Diploma students have not become involved in any community development initiatives except those that relate to the church. Two are not involved in any projects at all, although one was a member of a community-policing forum while he was studying. One is working with youth through the church; another was elected in January 2000 to the school governing body, but it has not been particularly active: 'We haven't done so much' (female student, 18/11/00).

The Certificate students, on the other hand, are involved in a range of projects and community structures. One ABET facilitator is a choir leader and Sunday school teacher, and works in a youth development programme as well:

> *'Not actually a project that you can expect money from, the project that can help build up the human being, our human beings - mentally, spiritually and physically. So that you can't commit suicide in that kind of state - that moral issues.'*
>
> (interview, 26/11/00)

This facilitator is also vice-chairperson of the school governing body where she feels she helps with conflict resolution. She is a member of the poultry project (see also section 2.1.4) and assisted with the project proposal and business plan. Her experience is echoed by others when talking about the impact of the course:

> *'CACE built my self-confidence and brought development here because ... I didn't know how to run meetings and many things ... And if we want to start something, I've got that how to do it or how to start it. It empowered me and brought a self-development to me ... There are so many things that I am very proud about that course that I did.'*
>
> (ibid.)

The second ABET facilitator is involved in the poultry project and a community pre-school project where she helped with research and drawing up a business plan and the third student runs HIV/AIDS workshops. The student who is a CPM travels all the time and is therefore not active in development.

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However, a fifth student working as a facilitator at a centre 20 kilometres away is chairperson of the local development forum, and also involved in a community garden and a community shop for pensioners.

Why is there not a greater number of development initiatives?

Course-related factors

The Advanced Diploma was intended to equip students for a wide range of adult education opportunities. For this reason, as discussed in Chapter 2, the development agenda does not underpin all modules of the Advanced Diploma: the thread linking all skills and knowledge to this agenda is not as explicit as in the Certificate and the tools for creating systemic, strategic and educational mechanisms to tie ABET to income-generation and development processes are not always provided. Examples of such tools would be participatory research and analysis, an understanding of sustainable development and the possible roles of ABET and skills training within this. Several respondents identified the module on learning programme design and evaluation (part of Module 2 – Adult Education and Training: Theory and Practices – which was based on Arnold et al. 1995) as useful but not extensive enough. Change within organisational structures is well covered but students are not overtly encouraged to take responsibility for the development of the community as a whole.

The Certificate, on the other hand, sets out to nurture a sense of social responsibility (CACE staff member, 28/01/01) and all modules develop skills and knowledge for community development.

Class factors

Advanced Diploma students, on the whole, belong to an existing or emerging middle class and as such tend to form an elite within small communities. The predominant middle class arena of community involvement, the church, is reflected in the areas of involvement that students list. Many already have relatively secure employment and related commitments. As a result:

> *'... the struggle to survive for them is very individualistic to acquiring material wealth, to satisfy their individualistic household needs and ... where they use their intellectual capacity, they are using it for social mobility. They do not ... say that we have a section of the working class that are oppressed and we must use our intellectual capacity [for] the freeing of our fellow human being.'*
>
> (social worker, De Aar region, 12/12/00)

This respondent was not referring to Noupoort in particular and this analysis does not hold for all Advanced Diploma students, many of whom are committed to development and/or active in political structures. Some are also in the higher levels of management in different sectors and have very heavy work commitments. Nevertheless, the content of interviews suggest that class interests may well be a factor inhibiting Advanced Diploma students' involvement in development in Noupoort.

Certificate students have a very different educational and employment history (fewer, if any, years of formal study and less secure or no employment) and are often able to seize the opportunities offered by the Certificate to open new avenues for themselves but also for those around them. Their opportunities for employment are also more closely tied to the development of the community as a whole.

Contextual factors

There are also a number of contextual factors that influence students' ability to initiate or sustain development projects.

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The macro-economic context is disheartening. The local economy is skewed, with most resources located in one section of the town's population while other communities have no financial capital. Cash flow is extremely limited and inhibits the sustainability of small businesses. The infrastructure is weak, with limited access to affordable transport. Natural resources are limited; community leaders have been thinking about using leather from sheep hides and the stone that is a feature of the landscape for income-generating projects, but there is little else.

Social capital defined by Scott-Goldman (2001:9) as 'networks, membership of groups, relationships of trust, access to wider institutions of society' is strong within communities but the relationships between communities are still tentative and sometimes actively avoided. Access to institutions such as banks and legal assistance is still very limited. The incidence of HIV/AIDS was not specifically mentioned in Noupoort interviews but was constantly referred to in other sites and is presumably a factor here as well.

Appropriate skills and knowledge for participation in development activities or income-generation are scarce, especially in poorer communities. Previous projects have been plagued by mismanagement and problems with financial control. Such project histories can negatively influence the flow of funds into new projects.

However, despite the gloomy economic situation in Noupoort there are several hopeful features: there is a more representative local council, elected in November 2000, and a growing number of women in leadership positions, both in local government and in other structures and income-generating projects. Ironically, this latter development may be partly the result of the absence of economic opportunities in Noupoort, which forces men to become migrant labourers. Nevertheless, it provides the potential for resources to flow more evenly to both men and women, and for control to be more equally shared. There is also evidence of increasing organisational development in school governing bodies, youth organisations, and local development forums. More efficient structures will be more likely to access funds for new projects. Many of these developments have only begun in the last year and their long-term effectiveness cannot yet be evaluated.

The Chemicals Manufacturing project, which will provide at least 100 jobs, may boost cash flow within the community and enable smaller businesses to generate an income (see section 2.1.4).

Suggestions for harnessing ABET to develop the Noupoort economy

The following suggestions were made by respondents in Noupoort:

- Offer skills training at PALCs:

  'Most of our learners, they want to do carpentry, bricklaying and those things. We don't have them. We are not trained for them. So that is the problem we have in our centre. And other women want to do baking and sewing and all that.'

  (CACE student and facilitator, 26/11/00)

- Increase the professionalism and marketing skills of learners who are already skilled workers/ artisans.
- Offer learners computer literacy and driving skills.
- Provide additional training and skills to learners involved in crafts, to improve the quality of products:

  'I think they need more training in handwork because if you look at what they are doing, at least you could see they've got the vision what to do ... Because, you know, when they're selling in the market, [people] are going to look very critically at what you've done. Then maybe it will be a lesser market.'

  (community leader, 11/12/00)

- Deepen and extend the business skills that have already been developed in the poultry project.
- Further develop problem-solving skills of learners.

2.8 Conclusions

Several conclusions can be drawn from the Noupoort case study.

CACE students can be credited with participation in an ABET centre that has been successful in increasing access and has above average pass and throughput rates. Two past students now hold supervisory positions in the Education Department's structures, and two are facilitators. CACE has also contributed more widely to the skills base of educators in Noupoort, and most of the students are still involved in teaching, even if they are not teaching adults.

There is also some limited community development taking place. Although CACE students in Noupoort cannot be credited as catalysts for these projects, they play active roles. In a small community where social networks are intense and diverse, a small number of people can have significant effects but these are inhibited by the macro-economic and political context. The poultry project is an example of an anti-poverty initiative by women to expand their economic opportunities and earnings. It is a particularly interesting strategy in that it is not focused on the household and related skills and knowledge. Such strategies are considered important for overcoming female poverty and affirming women's contribution to the survival of the family unit and the local economy (Buvinic and Lycette 1988). However, one small enterprise such as this is not sufficient to overcome the negative growth pattern in Noupoort; this requires a many-pronged approach. The chemical factory that started in Noupoort in 2000 may provide a boost and its impact on cash flow and development in the town would be interesting to track. Similarly, the current lack of linkage between local activities and a larger development plan for the town may improve as the new local council elected in November 2000 may have the political will to swing economic resources towards the most marginalised.

2.9 Recommendations for ABET provision and training of ABET workers

The opportunities for linking initiatives such as the poultry project to ABET provision are not yet exploited, although the potential is provided in ABET Unit's Multi-Purpose Community Centre proposal (Baatjes 2000). This proposal sets out a vision of a centre in which communities plan and manage their own development and in which adult learning centres offer a variety of education and training courses as well as information, communications services, computer literacy, career guidance and counselling, and other resources such as childcare. The following recommendations are made with this vision in mind:

1. The Department of Education, together with other stakeholders, should research and develop a plan that includes both the Noupoort and Protea adult learning centres and which is based on careful participatory analysis of community needs and assets and possibilities for sustainable livelihoods.
2. Ways should be found to build on the 'space' provided by ABET classes for learners to discuss community issues. Centres should offer short courses on, for example, leadership, conflict resolution, family health care including HIV/AIDS, pre-primary education, maintenance laws, and so on. Training in leadership and management skills is essential to ensure that women in particular are 'involved in decisions and not mere beneficiaries' (Stromquist 1986:6). Literacy is not a prerequisite for such skills. Women in Noupoort are already moving into leadership positions and their roles could be supported and strengthened by such courses.

3. ABET provision should exploit the relationship that seems to exist between involvement in income-generating projects and motivation for ABET which is particularly hard to sustain at the lower levels. Two possibilities are to offer small business development skills from Level 2 and to use the literacy and numeracy practices needed for small business as part of the content for literacy at Level 1. In addition, existing income-generating projects could be assisted by targeted short courses. The poultry project is one such opportunity and could be supported by courses on caring for poultry, hatching chicks, and small business skills.
4. Stakeholders should explore mechanisms for accessing funds for 'hard skills' in adult learning centres, through SETAs (Sector Education and Training Authorities) or partnerships of various kinds. Income-generating skills may be one way of attracting more men to the centres but would also change perceptions about what kinds of opportunities are open to women. (For a discussion of financing mechanisms for short courses and skills training, see further the *Afterword* and Appendix 11.)
5. The Department should offer technical skills training at ABET Levels 1 and 2 as well as higher levels: the high levels of unemployment in Noupoort and the province more generally would make this essential. Many kinds of skills such as agriculture, carpentry, or poultry care can be acquired by learners without high levels of literacy or any literacy at all. It is critical that the Department of Education at provincial and national level move away from a view of literacy and learning that ties wider knowledge and skills training to a certain level of literacy. One could argue that it is learners at the lower levels of ABET who are most in need of these skills, as few seem to move through the system to acquire a general education and training certificate. Statistics on these patterns are urgently needed for planning purposes.
6. Stakeholders should make use of the latent potential of Advanced Diploma students both in ABET and development. These students could also be asked to run workshops or short courses at the adult learning centre. While initially this would have to be voluntary, there are mechanisms through which funding for such activities could be accessed (see Appendix 11).
7. The Department together with all stakeholders should develop a clear, prestigious identity for the centre, through a programme of interesting community activities and short courses that offer immediately useful knowledge.
9. The Department should explore the potential of family literacy, which can be a creative solution to the problem of childcare. Setting up afternoon reading hours in which older members of the family read to young children while their parents or grandparents learn is another way of promoting literacy across generations.
10. Finally, to equip ABET workers to implement this vision:
    - training courses provided for adult educators should be negotiated with and evaluated by stakeholders to ensure that they meet the development agenda for the province;
    - courses should nurture a sense of social responsibility in students; and
    - tools such as participatory research, analysis and planning, an understanding of sustainable development, organising skills and small business development should be provided to enable students to harness ABET in support of development initiatives.

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3. CARNARVON – CASE STUDY 2

'These are poor areas, rural areas that do not have resources; ... And Carnarvon is fighting, there's nothing that we can do. That is how I see it.'

(CACE student)

'[Carnarvon is] a republic on its own. Ja, that place is not easy.'

(ABET regional coordinator)

3.1 The context

Carnarvon is a rural town in the upper Karoo region of the Northern Cape. It is 300 kilometres along a tar road from the 'capital' or bureaucratic centre of this region, De Aar, and is not on any major travel routes. There are shorter gravel routes but these are often impassable.

The economy of the town depends on the vagaries of sheep farming with periodic booms and slumps in the price of wool. The town has been in economic stagnation for many years. The only viable resource is the land, but there is as yet no land restitution process, although several families in the area claim land rights (Certificate student, Carnarvon, 21/09/00). Many of the farms are owned by absentee farmers who leave their farms to be managed by the workers who are paid wages of between R80 and R200 a month. Attempts to buy land by coloured middle class people are alleged to have been deliberately thwarted (ibid.).

The town is divided into two communities: 'Hier is net twee gemeenskappe. Ons sê mos die swart gemeenskap – bruin, Indier en almal – en die wit gemeenskap' ['Here there are only two communities: the black community – coloured, Indian and everyone – and the white community']. (Certificate student and community worker.) This division became pronounced after African inhabitants were forcibly removed during the apartheid years, a move that has left its mark on the coloured community in various ways. Some families decided to change their names, for example, from Mpondo to Hoorn, in a desperate bid for survival. Others were forced to move to the Eastern Cape.

A myriad of political, class and religious divisions have resulted in a stratified coloured community that remains largely powerless and landless. The centre of economic power is 'still concentrated in so-called whites in the town' while there is also:

'... a silent section in the community; they are mainly focused on the farms. And the relationships between the farmer and the farm worker are typically a feudal/slavery relationship where the farmers are perceived as the masters and your farm workers are perceived as your so-called slaves.'

(social worker, Carnarvon, 12/12/00)

According to informants, an attempt was made in the 1980s to set up an NGO called Caravan to address some of the pressing social problems in the area. It was repressed and its leaders imprisoned, one of the youngest (aged 16) spending a period in solitary confinement. Although the organisation was rebuilt, it is said to have run out of funds in the mid-1990s.

Political divisions kept the community apart with activists relying on faith to get them through the years when they could not trust anyone: 'not the doctor, not the magistrate; no-one' (student and community worker). The CACE students interviewed felt that the town has not healed because it is so isolated: 'You see, your political revolution in Carnarvon is not yet over. While others are busy with economic empowerment, we ... are struggling with political empowerment.' (translated from Afrikaans) (group interview with CACE students, 21/09/2000)

Education is still a luxury in the coloured Carnarvon community. In 2000 there were 1 400 registered primary scholars, but only 400 were registered in the secondary school. How to account for the gap and what happens to these lost students is unclear (social worker, 12/12/00). In the last five years a mere five matriculants have gone on to further studies. It is claimed that this happened as a result of fund-raising by past CACE students committed to furthering the educational opportunities of others.

The mainly coloured middle class employment category is nevertheless that of teacher:

> *'They do not have qualified social workers, qualified doctors, qualified workers. Professional public servants from the coloured area also do not play an active role.'*
>
> (ibid.)

3.2 The interview sample

This case study is part of a broader process of tracing the impact of the CACE courses on students working in ABET or other kinds of development activities. It describes the experiences of the Department of Education and other stakeholders involved with ABET provision in Carnarvon and is based on interviews with:

- six CACE students who were part of the first cycle of Certificate courses run over the period 1996–7, and one student who completed the Advanced Diploma in the Western Cape in 1997–8;
- the ABET regional coordinator (Department of Education) for the De Aar region; and
- three community leaders with an interest in ABET provision: Mr Shaheed Stuurman, social worker; Mr George Slaverse who is a former school teacher and now works at the Municipality in the Car Licensing Department, but who ran a successful literacy project with RDP funding in the past; Mr Bennie Hoorn, Principal of the Karel van Zyl Primary School, Chairperson of the Local Development Forum, active member of the ANC, and also a pastor.

Attempts were made to interview representatives of the Democratic Alliance, the party that holds the most seats in the local council, but one person was doing her washing and another was trying to sort out allegations of election fraud.

The interviews took place between September 2000 and January 2001 and reflect on events and experiences primarily from the period 1998–9/2000.

3.3 A brief history of literacy in Carnarvon

According to Mr Slaverse (see section 3.2), when the first coloured priest of the Dutch Reformed Mission Church arrived in Carnarvon in 1970, the only person in the Church Council who could read and write was the school principal (the father of a CACE Advanced Diploma student). This was a problem for the priest who needed members of his Council to accompany him to Commissions, sign documents, and so on. This priest, 'the father of literacy in Carnarvon', set up a study room in his house and began teaching literacy to the elders and deacons of the church. In 1971 the school principal applied to the then Department of Coloured Affairs for funds to start literacy classes for other members of the community. After his retirement, literacy 'lay dormant' (interview, Slaverse, 12/12/00).

A 'renaissance' was initiated by one of the current political leaders who is also a past CACE student (and called by Slaverse 'the father of modern literacy'). This man approached The Afrikaans Foundation (Die Stigting vir Afrikaans) who made funds available to start the Vastrap Literacy Project. Vastrap is still running with about 30 learners, using conservative, fairly child-centred methodologies. For a short time the RDP made funds available, and Slaverse himself was able to run literacy classes using Operation Upgrade training and materials that connected with everyday adult experience.

In 1997 some CACE students (including one Diploma student) tried to set up ABET classes during their second year of study. These students were academically successful and worked well together as a group. Despite their best efforts however, ABET did not take off in Carnarvon. Their experiences are described in more detail later in this chapter (see section 2.4.1): if the experiences described here are significant, and the future of community development is related to the success of ABET, the prospects for development in Carnarvon appear to have been dealt a severe blow. This case study explores some of the reasons for the failure of the project over the three years that followed 1997.

> *'Die grootste tragedie ... is net dat die Departement lyk ook asof hulle nou gekom het by 'n punt en gesê het dat Carnarvon is 'n turksvy. So hoe minder jy met Carnarvon betrokke kan wees, hoe beter.' ['The greatest tragedy ... is that the Department looks as if they have now reached a point where they have said that Carnarvon is a prickly pear [tricky problem]. So the less they can be involved with Carnarvon, the better.']*
>
> (ex-school principal/Advanced Diploma student/community leader)

3.4 Factors affecting ABET provision in Carnarvon

The material presented here confirms that there is no single reason or explanation why ABET provision failed to take off in Carnarvon but that a set of interrelated institutional and contextual factors have contributed to this situation. The views and experiences described by the respondents present a dense and at times even confusing impression of what is involved in trying to establish ABET in a small town like Carnarvon.

3.4.1 Institutional factors

Competing visions for ABET

The way ABET is implemented in Carnarvon suggests that ABET is interpreted as being ''n bietjie skool vir volwassenes' ('a bit of schooling for adults') (CACE interviewer). The historical legacy of adult education in Carnarvon seems to have shaped how people in the town from the teaching profession, the church, the Welfare department and previous learners and their communities perceive ABET. This has its roots in the thinking and practices of the old Department of Education, where it was schoolteachers who taught adult education classes (CACE student). ABET is viewed as formal schooling for adults, and links are not often made with economic and social development.

The interviews suggest that a similar approach has shaped the values and actions of the regional offices. 'The Department sees adult education as night classes, evening classes' (CACE students). Existing schools are seen as the only legitimate site for ABET provision: 'The Department says that we [CACE students] must have a professional teacher's certificate and [teaching] must be from 6 to 9 pm. ... And that is not what ABET is supposed to be' (CACE student).

Previous experiences with literacy programmes where learners did not make progress also seemed to influence responses to new initiatives:

> *'How ABET worked in the past has had an effect on the community because the people didn't make progress. And I think they began to feel: We're not getting anywhere, why should we go to school? I think that's where the problem started. The people didn't make progress. Here are people that have been going to school for 10 to 15 years, going to ABET classes, and there's no progress.'*
>
> (translated from Afrikaans) (CACE student)

CACE students introduced into Carnarvon an alternative approach to ABET. In this view ABET provides a framework linking literacy with basic adult education, income generation and development, and ABET can and should take place across a range of sites: 'Education does not have to take place

in a classroom, that doesn't work in practice. It can also take place under a tree, or wherever people are' (translated from Afrikaans) (CACE student). Learners should see literacy as a necessary skill with clear uses in everyday life as well as longer-term strategic benefits.

It is easy to see how the existence of a different and new approach (and the obvious zeal with which it may have been propounded) could be interpreted as a challenge to the ABET division at regional level, and how this could lead to difficulties between the regional coordinator and CACE students.

> *'[There is] ... some hostility between or a lack of understanding between the Department of Education, ABET division, and CACE ... And I think that hostility was one of the main reasons, as I see it, why ABET doesn't function ... in Carnarvon.'*
>
> (CACE student)

In addition, the presence of CACE students may have been seen by some as threatening teachers in the 'die aandskole' (night schools) which had been around for some time. Based in existing schools, night schools could provide a teacher with a welcome opportunity to augment a meagre salary. 'The people who were giving night school classes saw them [CACE students] as a threat' (Advanced Diploma student/Certificate tutor).

From the CACE students' point of view, then, they were set up in opposition to the Department of Education's regional ABET offices, and placed in competition with local teachers who left the profession as a result of rationalisation: 'The ABET division ... normally saw the CACE students as opponents to teachers that are in the profession already' (CACE student).

In an economically depressed town like Carnarvon with high unemployment, limited economic opportunities and little material development taking place, it seems inevitable that tensions around the possibilities of ABET jobs would arise. In situations of limited resources, few jobs are available for people living in communities still bearing the brunt of apartheid's social and economic policies.

What seems to have happened is that this situation was not anticipated, and when it arose it was treated as a threat to the authority of the regional office. There was tension, and no mechanism to facilitate a resolution. Rather than harnessing the new potential, CACE students were marginalised:

> *'... that clash between the Department and CACE ... that is the biggest cause of the death of ABET ... that they see CACE as a threat. They should rather see CACE as complementing [their work].'*
>
> (translated from Afrikaans) (CACE student)

The confusing situation in which the CACE students tried to find their feet and work contributed to feelings of demoralisation, and this has almost certainly contributed to the failure of the CACE ABET initiative in Carnarvon.

The significant factor in all of this is the lack of a common purpose. Any project that relies on extensive collaboration between, for instance, ex-teachers and others who previously gave literacy classes, community leaders, those working for the government, fieldworkers and business people, is unlikely to get off the ground and be sustained without a shared sense of purpose.

If, as is suggested here, achieving a common vision for the implementation of ABET has been a major problem, any solution ought to be linked to the existence of mechanisms whose purpose is to facilitate local consultations to establish that vision. If these kinds of processes had been used in Carnarvon, they would probably have led to the development of a more flexible and open organisational 'style'.

Consultation, communication, coordination and cooperation

The Department of Education's vision and programme for ABET provision in the De Aar region is the responsibility of a regional coordinator.

> *'I am responsible for administration in the region, that's number one; for the sub-management of ABET centres, number two; for organising centres and learners, facilitators, training facilitators, organising workshops and establishing a link between the ABET on the grassroots with ABET provisional level.'*
>
> (regional coordinator, 17/01/01

The interviews suggest that there is no clearly identifiable, coordinating structure among those involved in ABET in Carnarvon to enable consultation and conflict resolution and to manage resources effectively:

> *'I think it's probably that you must have someone who can coordinate, because at the moment I think we are sitting with a splintering of resources and there is never a point at which the resources are brought together.'*
>
> (translated from Afrikaans) (interview, Hoorn, 13/12/00)

Other informants mention poor coordination as well, no doubt a feature of the distance of the town from the regional centre.

There is no evidence of needs analyses being done in the Carnarvon area. Without such information it seems difficult to see how a 'distant' regional office can provide support in a coordinated and focused manner. The impression created by the interviews is that ABET initiatives do not move beyond the realm of personal initiative. This has serious implications for the role of the regional office and its regional coordinator, as they have direct access to power and resources.

In the case of the regional coordinator, issues relating to getting ABET off the ground do not appear to be discussed informally or publicly, but with those close to the official(s). There is as yet no consultative process with people at grassroots level, involving needs analyses, proposals, negotiation, assessment, planning and coordination. This is reflected in the way the regional coordinator talks about improving ABET provision:

Regional coordinator	I would like to concentrate on the skills training ... You know, I'm thinking of trying a project on agriculture or on chicken farming.
Interviewer	And are you able to do that?
Regional coordinator	I am able to do it. I spoke to some ... just a few of my older people in De Aar and then I tried to show them what my vision is for this year. So if they can come up and we can start the thing, I think it would be very profitable.

What seems to be suggested here is that power at ABET regional centres is located around individuals, and that access to resources is determined by the position of individuals in the structure of the ABET division. Support for ABET initiatives depends on the relation of the individual to the power centre, rather than their level of expertise or the strength of their proposed initiative. This

seems to be an entrenched organisational culture and way of doing things in Carnarvon. Interview material constantly refers to networks of 'friends', personal 'connections' and the importance given to which '*groepeering*' (grouping) you are identified with.

The ABET regional office is supposed to give direction based on the vision of the National Department. It is also responsible for taking into account stakeholders' views in order to establish a negotiated framework in which to implement and assess ABET initiatives. The absence of a broader framework, together with the mechanisms to facilitate the processes of communication and consultation between the grassroots and provincial levels of ABET is another key factor that contributes to the failure to get ABET functioning effectively in Carnarvon.

Implementing ABET policies and processes

In the interview conducted with the regional coordinator it was suggested that the rules and procedures around employment and numbers of learners required for classes were interpreted flexibly. As experienced through the eyes of CACE students, however, the rules are applied strictly in their case, but more sympathetically to people 'close to' the regional coordinator.

The negative consequences that can flow from these kinds of perceptions and the reactions to them are well illustrated in the following narrative. The attempts by two CACE students to establish an ABET centre in Carnarvon's Karel van Zyl Primary School early in 1999 seemed doomed to fail. (The narrative uses the present tense to create a sense of immediacy.)

Traditional adult education classes ('aandskool') in Carnarvon were in the past held at the Karel van Zyl Primary School. In 1998 two CACE students embark on a process of trying to establish an ABET centre at the school. The secretary of the school is also a CACE student. At first they approach the only other existing 'literacy project' in the town: Vastrap, a project run along more or less conventional lines which is funded by Die Stigting vir Afrikaans (The Afrikaans Foundation). They attempt to identify teaching areas that can be tackled by Vastrap and by the ABET centre, suggesting they focus on Level 2 and Vastrap on Level 1, and so working to support each other. Their approach is rejected.

They next approach the regional coordinator and inform him they would like to start a centre. At first they are told there are no funds or resources, but they set themselves the task of recruiting 100 learners and approach the regional coordinator with more than 40 completed application forms. On this basis the regional coordinator informs them that two posts will be made available. Four CACE students apply, and are interviewed by the regional coordinator and a 'Mr Davids'. Two are appointed, but one is the school secretary and is asked to step down in line with the policy 'one ABET teacher, one job'. She accepts this, but is devastated to learn that the regional coordinator also employs several in-service teachers at Level 4, who earn more than she does as a secretary. While the rule itself might help to address unemployment, it seems to her to mean that the most qualified person for the job is not employed. Another CACE student takes her place, but a Xhosa-speaking teacher at the school is also 'appointed' to act as 'supervisor'. He has no prior knowledge of ABET, and is therefore able to act as a centre manager, but unable to give support to the newly appointed facilitators. Before they start teaching they do a one-week Pro'' course (an intensive course in literacy training offered by a Pretoria-based NGO which was awarded a government tender to do ABET training nationally).

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The centre opens and teaching starts, but only five learners show up. The CACE-trained facilitators repeat their door-to-door recruitment as they are aware of the national policy of needing twenty learners per teacher or classes are seen as non-viable and cancelled. There is no support for recruiting learners, nor is there advice about what might be done to attract them. This policy places them under pressure to secure their jobs by spending time recruiting learners, and energy is taken away from facilitating ABET.

Meanwhile the teacher running the 'aandskool', who had wanted to pursue her involvement in adult education, and who withdrew when she took the retrenchment package, is now re-employed by the regional coordinator. This is perceived by the CACE facilitators as contravening a ruling that teachers who have taken the 'package' may not be re-employed. She is seen as being 'close' to the regional coordinator and her employment is interpreted as keeping an eye on the CACE facilitators. She sits in on classes and comments on them in front of learners, which some facilitators experience as intimidating.

Before a month has elapsed they are informed that Prolit will be coming for a field visit to assess how learners are progressing. They ask Prolit not to come. Shortly afterwards they are told to register learners for the IEB exam. They feel this is too soon. As new facilitators they also feel under pressure to deliver ABET and to meet the policy of twenty learners. At the end of the month, they are paid according to the number of learners in their classes – around R550 for teaching four nights per week for between two and four hours per session. At the same time the learners say it is not worth coming to classes if there are only five of them.

By this stage the CACE-trained facilitators feel demoralised, insecure and lacking in self-confidence as adult educators. Upset at their remuneration, they cease contact with the ABET division.

In 1999, one of them applies again but receives no response. The secretary of the primary school – the CACE student who applied for one of the Carnarvon ABET centre posts but stood down – receives cheques that have been mistakenly sent to the school. These cheques are payment for two people living in Skietfontein (a small community five kilometres outside Carnarvon) for giving ABET classes at the local ABET centre. According to CACE students, these two have had no adult education training – they are high school teachers.

When the regional coordinator was asked why people in Carnarvon struggle to get ABET going, he referred to what he saw as pervasive internal conflict: 'In the first place, I appointed two ladies who simply left the centre. There was at least something happening when we still had [Mrs X] there. But [Mrs X] took the package and she went out.'

He later says: 'I had [Mr Y]. I had him there for supervising the place. He reported to me that: "Man, these people do not come to school. The facilitators do not attend so I would advise you not to pay." ... So it fell flat.'

These, then, are the conflicting versions of how an initiative to establish an ABET centre in Carnarvon failed.

In a climate of shrinking job opportunities, and having just completed training to equip them for entering the ABET field, CACE students in Carnarvon experienced the practices of the Department of Education's handling of their attempt to establish a centre as unfair and demoralising. It is obvious that the lack of clear and acceptable roles and procedures were largely responsible for the accumulating feelings of mutual mistrust that characterised their experiences. But the CACE students cannot be seen as blameless actors in this story; some may have unwittingly contributed to the situation by interpreting others' actions in a conspiratorial or hostile light, whereas other actors probably saw themselves as taking decisions in reaction to difficult circumstances.

Although the apparent lack of transparency in the decision-making structures of ABET may be the result of inexperience and inappropriate training, it has resulted in mistrust and feelings of insecurity, and ultimately contributed to a lost opportunity to exploit new people and ideas for the benefit of the residents of Carnarvon.

Support

Without a common vision to sustain cooperation and an infrastructure for communication and delivery, support is unlikely to be effective.

As we have seen, not giving support for a new initiative in ABET affected the skilled but relatively inexperienced CACE students and made them feel isolated and undervalued. The impression created of strong top-down attitudes induced anxiety. Their feelings of powerlessness were increased by the short-term contracts and punitive payment policies. By comparison, the municipality's policy of providing well-resourced, stable employment led to successful teaching outcomes.

In the interview with the regional coordinator, he was asked: 'Who is responsible for ... supporting the teachers; discussing their work with them, watching them teach and commenting on their teaching?' (interviewer). His response was that: 'The regional coordinator does that at times ... And the Cluster Programme Manager has to check also on that one' (regional coordinator).

The regional office adopts an approach which serves the regional coordinator's need to 'check' performance through a formalised set of questions and answers, with little professional support given by way of careful observation, discussion and constructive feedback on approach, methodology, facilitation, or other issues related to the teaching process:

> *'I designed a form last year ... where I have questions for the CPM. When he reaches your centre, he comes to you and he questions ... He checks on the register. He looks at the theme, correlates the theme with the exercises that are given. So then he can at least tell you if your lesson goes [no transcription].'*
>
> (regional coordinator)

At the time of the initiative to set up an ABET centre at the Karel van Zyl Primary School there was no Cluster Programme Manager to provide support. Instead, as indicated in the narrative above, a Xhosa-speaking teacher from the school - was called in 'for supervising the place' (regional coordinator).

Those responsible for ABET at regional level seemed to show little interest and there was no support when they experienced a decline in attendance of learners. One student said:

> *'So we still carried on, then we said to them "no-one is interested, no-one comes to ask, no-one helps us". Our supervisor ... gave Xhosa classes ... and he also did not encourage us ... He was also not interested ... basically what he did ... he just came to give us our money that day'.*
>
> (translated from Afrikaans) (Certificate student)

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This lack of support and encouragement from their 'supervisor' and the regional coordinator is seen by the students as a lack of interest on the part of the Department: '... The Department did not pay much attention because in my opinion they show absolutely no interest in ABET classes, because our coordinator ... we gave classes for a month and we saw him twice (translated from Afrikaans) (Certificate student). The perception that neither the Department of Education nor the regional offices are working with the local community to get ABET off the ground is widely shared:

> *'As I said, my greatest concern was about the time when the Department saw something dying and didn't care a scrap. The existence of Skietfontein was enough for them and that almost says to me that ... they also won't care if we don't have an ABET centre again next year. So how long will it be before they as a Department say to us "But you had this thing, it's dead, what is the score?" [The regional coordinator] never came to ask me: "What happened there?" And it's one and a half years later.'*
>
> (translated from Afrikaans) (Certificate student/community leader).

> *'If the Department only has an ABET centre in Skietfontein, for example, and they are satisfied with a tiny community having an ABET centre while the bigger Bonteheuwel/Carnarvon doesn't have a literacy programme, except Vastrap ... When the ABET project stops and the Department sees it stopping, but they do absolutely nothing to get it off the ground again, then I say that those people began to say that they want nothing more to do with Carnarvon so that if we in Carnarvon want to have development, then we must stand up ourselves and say this is what we think should happen.'*
>
> (translated from Afrikaans) (ibid.)

Long distances between De Aar and the pilot centres make contact and communication difficult at the regional level:

> *'And the place (Carnarvon) is far from the regional office, you know. If I go there, I must be prepared to ... sleep out for the week because I must visit Victoria West, Loxton, Carnarvon, Vanwyksvlei ... So it's not easy for you to decide to visit them every week.'*
>
> (regional coordinator 17/01/01)

The Certificate tutor (who is also an Advanced Diploma student) who recognised that the CACE students would need mentoring after their course had been completed, did not feel that he supported them sufficiently:

> *'...if only I had motivated these ten students more and pushed them to play a bigger role in the community ... They should have made themselves visible and they went and sat and waited and no-one knew, or unfortunately in Carnarvon we have the situation that no-one is prepared to approach them.'*
>
> (translated from Afrikaans) (CACE tutor)

Having recognised that the less experienced and less confident students might find it difficult to 'promote themselves' or 'market themselves' in a context of 'conflict within the community', he found it difficult to encourage them for the very same reasons: promoting the students or taking any initiative may always be seen as having ulterior motives. 'If you do something there is always a question mark. No one sees the positive angle, they question your motives' (translated from Afrikaans) (tutor). The prospect of power struggles in Carnarvon has inhibited many of those wanting to get ABET off the ground by instilling a kind of self-censorship.

However, whilst this tutor is no doubt affected by this situation, he is also perceived, at least by one student as being

> *'... very involved in politics so he is politically aware. Often he makes statements that are politically intended, to play on people's feelings. I was one of his students last year; it's good to work with him but you can't depend on his full support.'*
>
> (translated from Afrikaans) (CACE student)

3.4.2 Professional factors

Literacy teaching skills

CACE students' strengths lay in their understanding of ABET as something broader than literacy, which linked adult education, literacy and training for income generation. ABET was seen as being part of a broader community development project. However, all the Certificate students were part of the 1996–7 cycle and were not exposed to approaches to literacy introduced in the second cycle that explicitly linked ABET to development through participatory planning processes. Students therefore did not have sufficient knowledge and experience to develop learning programmes that would tie in closely with development needs, nor did they have enough training in how to develop and sustain literacy skills within such an approach. This put them at a disadvantage, particularly as ABET as 'night school for adults', was the dominant practice into which students would have to insert themselves as change agents. Students said that they did not get sufficient practical teaching experience while on the course and this was no doubt one reason why a number of students relied on Prolit training and materials when it came to teaching reading and writing skills. In addition, there was a lack of clarity and consultation between different providers and CACE assumed at the time that Prolit was responsible for course-specific training. Those CACE students who went into community organisations were least affected by this lack of clarity.

Moreover, it is clear from the interviews that some students were never really interested in giving literacy classes – their interests and experience lay elsewhere: 'I wasn't really interested in ABET, you see. I really wanted to work in an organisation because for me the sort of work that we learnt there is more for an organisation' (translated from Afrikaans) (CACE student).

The course and employment

The seven CACE students who made up the interview sample in Carnarvon (see section 3.2) were employed after completing the course in the following ways.

- Student 1: Remained a primary school administrator, took a course in gender issues, counsels in school, appointed as an ABET facilitator, withdrew to allow another unemployed student to take her place.
- Student 2: Remained a community activist, continued advice work and unpaid activities.
- Student 3: Left Carnarvon in search of work, returned and attempted to start ABET.
- Student 4: Appointed ABET facilitator, attempted to start ABET, employed by Prolit to train near Saldanha.
- Student 5: Briefly involved in a bakery project.
- Student 6: Involved in serious motor accident, now starting an Arts and Culture project.
- Student 7: Tutored CACE students. Now involved in political activities and a computer centre.

Jobs in Carnarvon are hard to come by. Although it was not often referred to directly, several students talk about their course as if they expected it to guarantee formal employment. In some cases the failure of a job to materialise was perceived as a reason why they should cease involvement with ABET. Nevertheless, in spite of the fact that some of these students did not benefit in terms of their careers, all were able to use what they had learnt in public or voluntary capacities.

The lack of correlation between completing the CACE courses and employment needs to be seen in relation to many contextual and personal factors. There are several examples of CACE students without jobs who work tirelessly trying to get projects going. In such cases, students often do community work in several different sites at the same time. For example, an unemployed student involved in Vastrap also worked in the Carnarvon Advice Office, the Council of Churches, the Community Policing Forum and the Caravan Community Project. He was an ANC 'election coordinator' during the recent local elections (November 2000). His community work meant dealing with issues ranging from labour and crime, to HIV/AIDS and 'kindermishandeling' (child abuse). A number of students had similar levels of commitment and involvement.

Nevertheless, in an area characterised by chronic unemployment, the job prospects attached to the course are bound to be an issue:

> *'Unemployment can be a terrible handicap for a community in the development process ... you are busy with a task and then you have to deal with problems linked to unemployment and you have to turn your attention to them and it holds the process back.'*
>
> (translated from Afrikaans) (CACE student)

Networking and organisational involvement

CACE students in Carnarvon seem to be in contact with each other, but two indicated that it was a mistake not to have established a network of CACE students working in other towns in the Northern Cape:

> *'I think that was one of our mistakes, that we never built up a network.'*
>
> (translated from Afrikaans) (CACE student)

Several said that they would have benefited from a post-course backup to deal with issues that arise out of the practical application of what has been learnt on the CACE modules. A representative view was:

> *'The courses are over and they [the students] go back, then there are still a few issues that you would like to address but CACE is no longer involved with the students.'*
>
> (translated from Afrikaans) (CACE student)

In view of the fractious nature of Carnarvon and the insecurity regarding jobs, several students suggested that not being involved in an organisation or some form of employment prior to doing the CACE course was a disadvantage when it came to applying what they had learnt:

> *'Let me explain this right. They should have said in the first place, if you want to apply to CACE then you must already be working in an organisation.'*
>
> (CACE student)

> *'Now I'm sitting here with a heap of modules in my brain but I don't have a job where I can apply them.'*
>
> (translated from Afrikaans) (CACE student)

This view was widely held by those who did not want to become formal ABET or community development practitioners. One said: 'I wasn't really interested. For me it was a way of getting a job, I would get a job, you see.' Those students who have had experience in institutions, schools or NGOs, etc., even at low salaries, have managed to apply their learning to community work and associated contexts more successfully than those with less experience. Selection criteria that specified community experience were amended in 1998 to allow more unemployed people on to the Certificate course. This was part of the mobilisation for the national Ithuteng campaign, which did not generate as many jobs as expected.

3.4.3 Contextual factors

Making sense of the political life of Carnarvon, based on the transcripts of the interviews, has proved to be difficult and comments must remain tentative and speculative. However, it seems possible to sum up the negative context of development in Carnarvon by saying that the intimidating environment inhibits initiative. Respondents indicate that attempts to recruit learners for classes are hampered by a range of factors and attitudes: unemployment; a history of dependency, helplessness and alcohol abuse; religious teachings ('we are on this earth to suffer'); conservative attitudes; and, of course, the consequences of apartheid barriers. These factors also fuel the power struggles thrown up by the changing political landscape of the 'new democracy'.

Factionalism

Carnarvon is a 'versplinterde' (fragmented) community, broadly split between the 'haves' and the 'have nots', with political, race/linguistic, religious, and economic sub-factions involved in a fight to obtain or to retain scarce resources, and claiming distinct social inheritances:

> *'Here it's basically about power. You see, the political revolution is not yet over in Carnarvon. While others are busy with economic empowerment ... we are struggling with political empowerment.'*
>
> (Advanced Diploma student/tutor)

In Carnarvon, CACE students are identified with the political party that does not hold economic power in the town. Generally, people's perceptions are that the power struggles in Carnarvon between and within the various groups, have a negative impact on ABET and development: those who might want to get ABET off the ground will be blocked by an opposing group. 'You know, if you try to organise something, because I belong to that faction, I destroy it, you see' (regional coordinator).

Slaverse, who previously ran literacy classes with RDP funding feels that 'the most important thing is that ABET facilitators must not be labelled. People must not hang labels around your neck. They must not [be able to] say "I'm not going to his classes, he belongs to that political party"' (12/12/00) (translated from Afrikaans). The only way to gain learners' trust is to be 'absolutely neutral'.

Self-censorship and the stifling of initiative

The divisions and power struggles have strengthened the tendency to question and stifle initiative. As previously discussed, a kind of self-censorship has been instilled to avoid being accused of having ulterior motives when one shows initiative.

Critical distance and creating a middle passage between the political and the personal

Understanding the links and the distinctions between personal, educational and professional issues may enable people to escape the vicious circles of power and factionalism. If this is so, the aspects of CACE modules that encourage students to critically reflect on their social environments may

be as useful in developmental terms as the more straight-forward acquisition of skills. One student indicated that the ***Organisational Development*** module helped to expand his capacity for critical reflexivity and critical distance in his subsequent engagement with community and political party: 'There are so many in-fights in the ANC in Carnarvon ... so the Advanced Diploma taught me to evaluate the community and especially your own organisations'(translated from Afrikaans).

This student used what he had learnt in the this module to shift the community policing forum away from being used as an instrument in party political power struggles: '... people used it as an instrument to reach their own goals.' He describes what he tried to do as 'building a relationship between your community and the police ... and that is what community policing is about.' This politically active student gained the ability to be more flexible, allowing for more complexity in his analysis of his society, greater respect for different perspectives and the ability to see 'the job that you are doing on a more professional level'.

Skills levels and employment practices

Two community leaders feel that the skills brought by CACE Certificate students are valuable resources but qualify this by saying that some are perceived as being young and inexperienced. Youthfulness and lack of experience are especially perceived as inhibiting factors in a community which values status and experience. One of the community leaders who previously ran successful literacy classes goes so far as to suggest that the CACE 'facilitators were much younger than I was and because they were younger, they were also more uninformed' (translated from Afrikaans). He also says that the fact that they had not had practical experience during the course was a handicap. This respondent taught literacy full-time for three years, from 1995 to 1997, with RDP funding and shows a sound understanding of adult learning and reading skills development.

CACE students, however, feel that the selection of people for employment in development projects or community work is based largely on one's relationship to those in power. Skills and expertise appear to be of secondary importance:

> *'They will rather get someone else ... Even if the person can't draw up a business plan or whatever, even if he gives the wrong information ... because he belongs to that group.'*
>
> (CACE student)

This makes it difficult for those who try to place ABET above party politics and wish or claim to be involved in community development on the basis of their expertise. Development driven by political agendas does not prioritise the same resources or expertise.

'Development' is a divisive issue

The experience of poor residents of Carnarvon is that development seldom appears to be in their interests or to meet their needs. While this perception needs to be substantiated with further research, it is clear that the very idea of 'development' remains a contentious issue because historically it has meant development of one group at the expense of another, or along race, class, or ethnic lines. Residents would rather see no development at all than the development of one community at the expense of another: 'People don't want to see others make progress and that's just a [form of] protectionism' (CACE student).

Lack of funding

Any enthusiasm that remains for ABET, in spite of the above impediments, is further dampened by the lack of access to funding. 'You want to do something; you want to be worth something ['iets beteken'], but the funds are not there' (translated from Afrikaans) (CACE student). In relation to ABET, the research suggests that building ABET along a more professional trajectory has not

encouraged people in Carnarvon to become learners at Level 1 and that a vicious circle sets in, with insufficient numbers of learners leading to no funds to no employment opportunities, and so on.

Social stigma

In discussing why the skills and resources created by CACE are not being more generally used by people in Carnarvon, facilitators said they felt that the predominantly coloured community is embarrassed to admit illiteracy: 'let me say coloured, coloured communities don't want to acknowledge that they cannot read and write' (translated from Afrikaans) (CACE student).

Lack of political will and coordination on the part of government

Some students believe that the Northern Cape government lacks sufficient political will to coordinate literacy provision in the province. They believe that a policy for literacy provision, especially in the rural areas, and a task team to implement the policy need to be set up. The task team should include NGOs and the private sector but would play an all-important coordination role to ensure that problems of transport, distance and sustainability are overcome.

Students have identified farmworkers as an important constituency to reach: 'I thought I should reach out to the surrounding farms to give people classes there'. The social worker, Mr Shaheed Stuurman, identifies the same need. He describes the relationship between farm owner and farmworker as feudal: farmers are often absent, and farmworkers who run the farms still get paid only R200 or R300 a week. Students allege that some get as little as R80. They argue that 'if they are literate, then they can get further.' Students have, in fact, approached farmworkers who responded positively to the idea of literacy classes. The problem is lack of transport for facilitators to provide classes on the farms.

Apart from the lack of transport preventing farmworkers from benefiting from ABET and the inability of students to reach them, Stuurman identifies a broader problem, namely, the 'lack of organisation of the farmworkers', and the disinterest in this shown by 'your so-called intellectuals in Carnarvon ... They do not render services. They do not organise your dispossessed workers' (12/12/00).

Some CACE students have given this issue some thought. One says:

> *'What must happen is that the government in the Northern Cape must say how it is going to tackle literacy in the rural areas ... on the farms. And out of that task team the whole thing must be coordinated because you need transport and the farms are very far away. So coordination is important. But you don't want a situation where it goes well for six months and you hold classes and the next six months the facilitator doesn't come out any longer because the car broke down or turned over or there's no more petrol, petrol prices have risen. So it needs good planning, and that's why I say government will have to sit down and say: We want [to do this] and then say let NGOs or the private sector, come and take it on'.*
>
> (translated from Afrikaans) (CACE student)

3.5 Recommendations

Possibilities for increasing the effectiveness of ABET and development in the town include:

1. Developing a broad common vision based on a shared understanding of ABET and development, which links adult education, literacy and economic and social development. This could mean arranging a series of workshops between the ABET Division and local stakeholders.
2. Creating a resourced, transparent coordinating structure with mechanisms for consultation and conflict resolution.

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3. Initiating a dialogue about the use of resources. The aim would be to provide a link between potential learners and their needs, ABET centres and the Department of Education and in line with those who call for a coordinating body or umbrella organisation. ('oorkoepelende liggaam').
4. Conducting a needs analysis with different interest groups and bringing groups together in a participatory process of analysis and planning.
5. Equipping Cluster Programme Managers to fulfil the support needs of facilitators. This would involve the acquisition of appropriate skills, knowledge and experience to offer pedagogical support and mentoring.
6. Ensuring transparent selection processes – advertising using a range of channels and including representatives from local ABET communities on a selection panel. Criteria to be used could include: formal ABET qualifications, demonstrable skills, experience and understanding of development, commitment, etc.
7. Working towards parity in the payment of ABET facilitators and school teachers.
8. Adjusting policies on the number of learners needed to begin ABET classes and pay facilitators.
9. Proclaiming ABET publicly as a non-partisan project, beyond party politics, race, or ethnic divisions. Encouraging different groupings to register as learners based on the usefulness of the courses being offered.
10. Using differences in gender, language, and age as the basis for a deliberate policy to encourage diversity and address factionalism. Ensuring that expertise and youthful talent are valued as well as status and experience.
11. Exploring the potential for practical job-creating projects and partnerships similar to EEI chemicals production project at Noupoort (see section 2.1.4) but linking these directly to ABET.
12. Investigating possible alliances between development initiatives and religious groups in order to tap into existing social networks and to provide a stronger motivational base for ABET.
13. Offering a range of short courses at all ABET levels to attract learners and raise the status of ABET, for example: accessing the new maintenance laws, childcare or pre-school training, skills training, farm management. Such courses can be offered to learners even if they do not have functional literacy skills. See Appendix 11 on financing such courses.
14. Ensuring that courses which build development capacity for trainers contain:
    - an understanding of development theory and practice that underpins all knowledge and skills taught;
    - discussions of different social, economic and cultural environments;
    - the teaching of facilitating and organising skills in different languages;
    - an understanding of democratic institutions, civics, and creating access to resources;
    - ideas and practices that integrate ABET provision with development;
    - practical business skills;
    - opportunities to gain local practical developmental experience;
    - writing, critical thinking and research skills; and
    - health and aids awareness training.
15. Stating clearly in ABET course brochures that the Department of Education has no obligation to employ graduates.

16. Linking up with existing networks of those involved in ABET (presently CACE students) to help people to learn from experiences elsewhere.
17. Acknowledging that development can, and should be encouraged to, take place in different ways and through a diversity of channels. Active citizens wishing to set up independent, voluntary, religious, or non-formal projects should be able to use resources at ABET centres.

With sound policies in place, resources can be focused around projects characterised by mutual respect and cooperation, drawing on available expertise and experience and open to new ideas. Decision-making can take place at project level as well as through mechanisms that link grassroots to regional and provincial levels. Such an approach helps to build a common sense of purpose through merging individual and group objectives. It also allows greater scope for youthful energy and innovation.

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7 CONCLUSION

'To my mind, if any people ... have the capacity to change the system or at least confront some of the things in the system, it should be those people [CACE students].'

(secretary of Northern Cape AET Council, former member of the ABET Unit, 25/09/00)

Summary

This chapter summarises the benefits that CACE students have brought to the ABET project and its learners, including the wider community development context. Major achievements and weaknesses are discussed, and suggestions are made for increasing the transformative potential of courses and programmes.

Positive impacts made on the ABET project:

- a core of skilled adult educators active in a wide range of sectors and committed to the learning and development needs of others;
- the promotion of human rights, tolerance and respect;
- increased access to ABET by learners at all levels;
- increased capacity for ABET delivery in terms of improved planning, monitoring and financial management within the ABET Unit;
- innovative approaches to adult education and development in other sectors;
- limited but definite impact by some students on social and economic change in their communities: and
- increasing awareness of ABET as a means for achieving social goals.

Aspects that merit further consideration in the light of this study:

- the need for pedagogical support to staff attempting to transform educational processes;
- a joint ABET Unit/CACE plan on how to help ABET facilitators create and sustain programmes with development potential; and
- policies and procedures that ensure coherence and a closer match between adult education courses and the development agenda for the province.

1. BENEFITS THAT CACE STUDENTS HAVE BROUGHT TO THE ABET UNIT AND ITS LEARNERS[1]

The 1996 ODA Project memorandum states the goal for the partnership as being 'high quality ABET provided to groups previously denied' and gives an 'increase in numbers participating in and graduating from ABET' as the key indicator. Two of the central purposes of the partnership were to develop a larger and better qualified pool of ABET trainers and sustainable capacity for improved ABET delivery.

Numbers attending ABET centres have indeed increased. The number of adult learning centres increased from 19 in 1995 to 95 in 2000 (chief education specialist, 31/10/00), and for that reason numbers graduating will have increased, but information prior to 1998 is not accurate enough to enable an assessment of the extent to which efficiency rates have improved. The increase in numbers involved in ABET management – from the ABET Unit head office to Cluster Programme Managers – has resulted in better planning and management as well as improving educational management and information systems (EMIS) and statistics. The introduction of CPMs has also improved the management and monitoring of adult learning centres.

Of those working in the ABET Unit, 36% of CPMs and 17% of facilitators are CACE students. Any impact of CACE courses on educational processes in learning centres is restricted by these numbers. Learners indicate that facilitators have assisted them to obtain rights and services that do not form part of the curriculum. A few have become involved in community structures or income-generating activities as a result of ABET classes. CACE students' facilitation skills and relationships with learners reflect the values and principles of CACE courses. However, their ability to transform both the content and the process of ABET has been limited by a range of institutional, contextual and course-related factors (see Chapter 4).

Many students planned and implemented successful educational programmes in community development contexts and in other sectors. These were generally short one-day workshops on particular topics, such as election procedures or HIV/AIDS. Few Certificate students developed sustained learning programmes that build skills slowly, over a length of time. In public adult learning centres students do not yet have sufficient hard skills to create learning plans that integrate adult learning principles, literacy or other skills and broader social and economic goals.

The weaknesses identified here include a need for improved communication channels and consultative mechanisms between facilitators in learning centres and managers at different levels, as well as for ways of motivating and valuing CPMs and facilitators. A performance evaluation system is needed and logistical systems for getting learning resources to centres and administering examinations need to be improved.

While the devolution of the course to a Northern Cape institution did not take place as expected during the second cycle, in 2001 CACE staff are working closely with ABET Unit trainers to run a third cycle of courses. The additional capacity for improved ABET delivery and training created by the Advanced Diploma has yet to be taken up by the Department. This is a loss to the ABET project.

The relatively large numbers of students taking the Certificate course in 2001 may add to the possibilities for change in ABET practices at learning centres. However, transformation will require attention to factors such as employment conditions and the need for pedagogical support to staff attempting to implement new methodologies. It will also require a discussion about how to find a balance between the formalised system of outcomes and unit standards necessary to achieve goals of mobility and portability, and a development-oriented approach suitable for a poor province with a largely rural economy. The Unit's proposal for a Multi-Purpose Community Centre moves towards merging these two imperatives. The vision of an MPCC as 'a learning site which enables communities

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to manage their own development, by providing access to appropriate information, facilities, resources, training and services' (Baatjes, May 2000) sees ABET as embedded within the social, economic and political life of the community. CACE graduates with their contextual understanding, organising, research and educational skills could play an important role within such a system, provided their ability to develop appropriate learning plans and contextualised reading and writing skills is addressed. Recommendations include:

- policies and procedures designed around principles that reflect what the partners agree is important at every level in the educational process (for example, job requirements and selection criteria at the systemic level, and lesson plans and feedback or observation forms at the educational level);
- a joint plan on how to help ABET facilitators create and sustain programmes with development potential;
- explicit support for innovation at the lower levels of the system; and
- outcomes and unit standards reduced to be manageable and simplified at lower levels.

2. BENEFITS THAT CACE STUDENTS HAVE BROUGHT TO OTHER SECTORS AND CONTEXTS

The CACE/Department of Education capacity-building project saw adult education as a tool for development more broadly. Past students form a core of development practitioners who are active, both professionally and voluntarily, in a very wide range of sectors. The following pie chart summarises the extent of students' involvement in development.

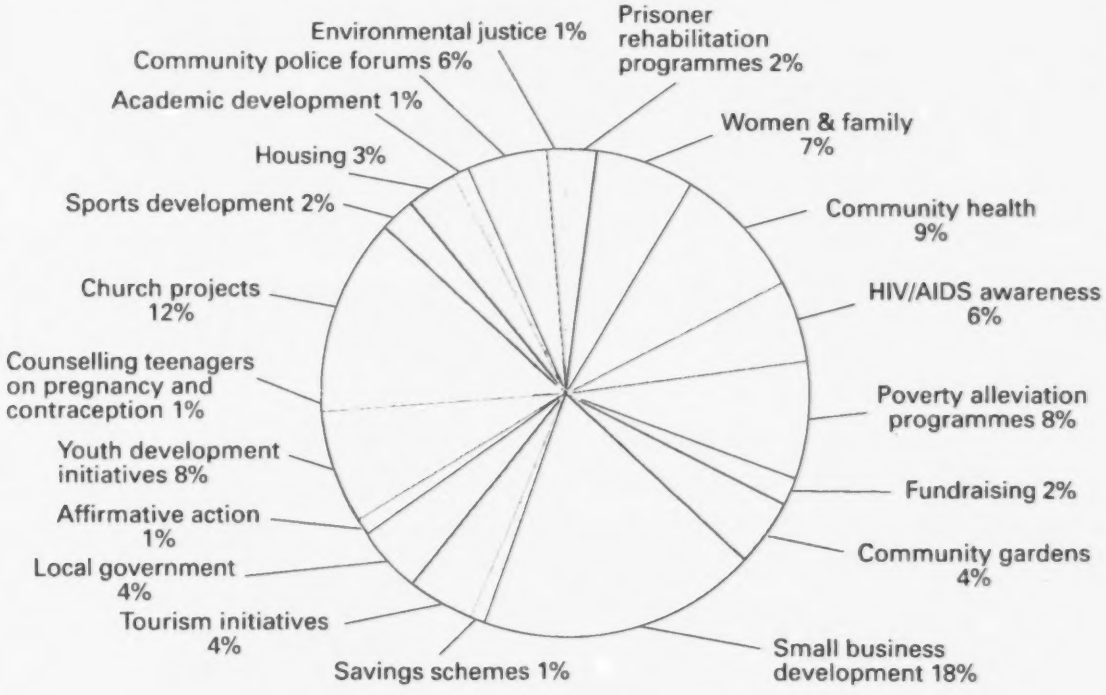

Figure 7.1 Community development – areas in which past CACE students are involved

Students have shown evidence of ability to set up, manage and sustain projects. Many show a deep commitment to the learning and development needs of others as well as to human rights, tolerance and respect. Skills and knowledge acquired on CACE courses are passed on to others in structures such as small businesses, community police or health forums, and school governing bodies. In sectors such as Correctional Services, Health, and Social Services there is a slowly increasing awareness of ABET as a means of reaching social goals and contributing to the success of integrated development plans.

Some students have had a limited but definite impact on social and economic change in their communities. There are a small but increasing number of small businesses and some income-creating and fund-raising projects. The majority of participants in these initiatives are women. Many projects are relatively new and their long-term sustainability is untested, but at least 13 are making a small profit.

While the contribution of ABET to increasing organisational development and democratisation cannot be quantified, in this research there has been clear evidence of its potential. The number of past students moving into leadership positions in local government and in local development forums and other structures means that students are in a position to back up their skills with resources and to use their positions as springboards for addressing local needs. The fact that the majority of these students are women in rural communities seems to indicate some impact on increasing gender equity in access to and control over resources.

This research has demonstrated the critical importance of the bursaries that were provided to students from under-resourced communities, who would otherwise not have had the opportunity to study. These bursaries have played a significant role in broadening the impact of the capacity-building project within the province.

3. CONCLUDING REMARKS

In spite of a disappointing impact on ABET provision so far, the remarkable levels of achievements by students working in development contexts seem to justify the broad generic nature of the CACE programmes. While adjustments to the courses can no doubt iron out weaknesses and enable a stronger impact on formal ABET provision in future, it is possible that students' contributions to communities through creating skills and building resources are ultimately more important at this stage in South Africa's development.

AFTERWORD

A conference to debate the findings of a draft version of this report was held in Kimberley on 17–18 April 2001. It was attended by the Premier Mr Mannie Dipico; the MEC for Education, Ms Tina Joemat-Petterson; the Director-General of Education, Mr Andre Joemat; the Director of the Higher Education Institute, Dr J. K. Taole; and delegates from various sectors including mining, AETASA, technical colleges, the Namibian College of Open Learning, the Gender and Disability units in the Office of the Premier, and funding agencies.

Three participants were asked to provide a response to the report: Michael Fortuin of the Northern Cape ABET Unit; Terry Groves, an Advanced Diploma graduate and development worker in the Springbok region; and Ivor Baatjes of the Centre for Adult Education at the University of Natal.

The first respondent, Michael Fortuin described achievements of CACE students in the Education Department (ABET Unit). He cited as an example a Certificate graduate who is now acting regional coordinator at the level of Deputy Chief Education Specialist. He suggested that CACE students are more confident than others when dealing with general issues and developments in communities, like the Cluster Programme Manager who has initiated a poverty alleviation project. He believed that courses should include small business skills in the Advanced Diploma, financial skills in the Certificate course, and a component on skills development in both. He also mentioned that some students grapple with learning programme design and some with literacy methodology, and he stressed the need for more computer training.

Terry Grove, the second respondent, pointed to the potential of the research module as an organising tool to be used by students for discussions and input. She outlined other benefits of the course for people from a small town like Komaggas (70 kilometres from Springbok on the West Coast). Taking the course exposed people to others facing similar problems with different languages, religions and cultures, and thus broadened their worldviews. Prior to this they had been locked into a closed system with little chance of contact with other people. Former students in her area are active in community centres, local development forums, local government, a spinning and weaving cooperative, the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM), church councils, school governing bodies and the ABET Council of De Beers Consolidated Mines. Two were employed by the Department of Education. She believed that CACE provides a broad, rounded adult education foundation but that courses have been limited by not having the provision of adult education classes as a strong enough focus: students learnt how adults learn and about literacy, but they were not equipped with sufficient 'hard' classroom skills such as lesson planning. Other providers, on the other hand, prepare teachers to perform in the classroom, but replicate the practices of day school classes. A balance between the two approaches is needed.

Ivor Baatjes, the third respondent, said that he wanted to describe the national policy and legislative background in order to offer a fuller explanation for the low percentage of CACE graduates who had been employed by the ABET Unit. The national government's Ithuteng literacy campaign was accompanied by an expectation that a large number of adult education posts would be created. The first year of the campaign was slow, but it started speeding up mid-year and larger numbers were mobilised for 1997. A second initiative in 1996 and early 1997 aimed to transform the public adult learning centres and, as a key element, to build the capacities of adult educators. These developments provided the impetus for the larger numbers of students who registered for CACE courses.

The regulatory framework of the Department of Education (1997) spelled out the employment conditions for people working in public adult learning centres. Since adult educators were not seen as being the same as schoolteachers it was a problem to get them employment on a long-term basis. There was no legal framework until the end of 2000 because of a deadlock over the Educators Employment Act. These problems had affected facilitator morale. Although the number of learners

in public adult learning centres had grown, the Provincial Government had failed to secure more posts, and Baatjes recommended that the ABET Unit go to the Minister and ask for more posts on the basis of numbers.

Baatjes emphasised that the Northern Cape is ahead of other provinces in terms of policy implementation, and he suggested that the government should focus on becoming the first illiteracy-free province in the country. This is an achievable goal, as there are only a quarter of a million people without basic literacy skills, compared to a province such as KwaZulu-Natal with three million in this situation.

Baatjes asked whether CACE had made sufficient provision for the new national curriculum development of 1996–7, including norms and standards. This point illustrates the tension characterising both CACE courses between developing generic adult educators able to move flexibly between contexts and the need for context specific skills, especially for facilitators in learning centres at Level 1.

A debate followed. Two speakers felt that the strength of the courses is that 'they try to address much more than the technical solution of how to handle situations in the classroom: they are concerned with the transformation of education and of South African society', while a mining sector representative said that training should be more practical and link with the Department of Labour.

The Director-General of Education suggested that the report might be used to challenge issues in the policy terrain, for example, what value CACE students have added and how this has contributed to the Department's broader role in development, what the definition of literacy should be and whether it should include technological literacy, or what ABET means for skills development. He felt that the document could serve as a challenge to the ABET Unit to realign their approach to adult education.

At the end of the final session the Conference called on the Department of Education, the MEC and the Province to take up the challenge to become the first 'illiteracy-free' province. The following recommendations were supported.

Information

1. To increase the dissemination of information to all ABET stakeholders.

Legislation

2. To implement the ABET 2000 Act immediately.
3. To make the ABET Council a statutory body. This is scheduled to happen later in 2001.

Vision

4. To promote lifelong learning as a key ingredient of poverty alleviation.
5. To develop and resource public adult learning centres along the lines of the vision articulated in the proposal for a Multi-Purpose Community Centre in De Aar (Baatjes, May 2000).
6. To ensure that governing bodies are in place and that learners play a role in deciding what is to be offered by the centres.
7. To research the need for ABET in the disabled constituency, and to include them in planning.
8. To consider the possibility that adult learning centres could be owned by other stakeholders besides the Department of Education and so become the responsibility of everyone involved in ABET.

Staffing

9. To employ appropriate full and part-time staff in centres. Full-time educators are essential to sustain ABET.
10. To explore the possibility that part-time educators can teach in a range of sectors and so increase their salaries.

Curriculum

11. To review curriculum in the following content areas:
    - contextual and awareness-raising information;
    - skills and knowledge for participatory democracy such as health issues and legal rights;
    - small business and income-generating skills as part of lower levels; and
    - skills and knowledge to address local needs.

Skills training

12. To include income generation as well as life skills.
13. To promote liaison between technical colleges and the ABET Unit.

Funding

14. To explore learnership and skills development strategies, and set aside a percentage of the National Skills Fund (NSF) for unemployed adult learners, especially in small towns.
15. To develop workplace skills plans to include ABET learners.
16. To pursue funding for short courses (see 11. above). Such courses may not be accredited or aligned to norms and standards, but can still be recognised. One means of financing them could be through a levy (discussed in Appendix 11).
17. To explore mechanisms for accessing funds for 'hard skills' in Multi-Purpose Community Centres (MPCCs), through Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs), or partnerships of various kinds.

Capacity-building

18. To ensure that a proportion of teachers in Department of Labour 'learnerships' are ABET facilitators.
19. To include lifelong learning skills and strategies in all teaching and training.

Funders were urged to continue to support capacity-building and research.

CACE was encouraged to build on the work already done by offering skills in niche areas such as training of governing bodies, materials adaptation, curriculum review and research.

ENDNOTES

CHAPTER 1: RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

1. Information in this section is taken from: Statistics South Africa (2000), based on Census 1996; 1997 Annual School Survey; Baatjes (2000), which draws on the Development Bank of Southern Africa (1998) *Report on the Northern Cape* and SALDRU database (1994) *Living standards and development* database; WEFA (1999) *Regional Economic Focus;* Central Statistics (1998) *Living in the Northern Cape.*

2. The average annual income of African-headed households is 72% of that of coloured-headed households, 38% of Asian-headed households and 16,5% of white-headed households (Baatjes, 2000:9).

3. The total number is 96 rather than 103 because seven students did both courses.

CHAPTER 2: THE ADVANCED DIPLOMA

1. Cluster Programme Managers visit centres to make sure they run smoothly by 'checking the attendance of the learners and checking the attendance of the facilitators themselves. And seeing whether the facilitators are teaching or are giving learners what they are supposed to teach them. And to make sure the books – LSM's – are available enough for the learners. And to see whether the facilitators prepare themselves by doing lesson plans and seeing whether [with] the homework or the class work they have achieved the outcomes of the work. (interview with Cluster Programme Manager, De Aar region). CPMs also check on 'assessment, not [teaching] style ... the number of tests and ... the standard of the tests' (interview with regional coordinator, De Aar region).

2. No white males took part in the course during this cycle.

3. Schaffer quotes Sewart in *Distance Education International Perspectives*, page 52 (a footnote states that the source document in CACE archives has no author, date or footnotes but the date appears to be about 1990).

4. A national Multi-Year Implementation Plan was developed for ABET in October 1997 and used as a basis for the development of nine provincial Multiyear Implementation Plans. The Northern Cape Plan was developed by the ABET Unit in consultation with the ABET Council for the years 1998-2001 (Northern Cape Department of Education, Training, Arts and Culture *1998 Annual Report*. Kimberley: Department of Education).

5. The development of a Masters programme was initially included as one of the project goals. However, this goal was dropped in 1998 after national and provincial 'discussion and debate over whether ... professional development of the adult educators should be where money was going or whether they should be doing basic literacy campaigns' (CACE staff member, 14/07/00). From 2002 CACE will offer an Intercontinental Masters in Adult Learning and Global Change by distance education in partnership with the University of Linkoping, Sweden, the University of British Columbia, Canada, and the University of Technology, Sydney, Australia.)

6. See Appendix 9: Current employment of Advanced Diploma interview sample.

7. Sources: ABET Unit facilitator lists for 1999, 2000; letter from L.P.J. Thulo to CACE, 25 August 2000; CACE report dated June 1996 *Preliminary reflections on the training of adult educators and trainer programme in the Northern Cape provinces.*

CHAPTER 3: THE CERTIFICATE COURSE

1. The name of the unit responsible for ABET changed over the years. To reduce confusion, the unit will be called throughout by its present name, the ABET Unit.

2. Outcomes for the course are attached in Appendix 5.

3. The Certificate database is not set up in a way that enables this query to be run; the narrative reports give slightly different numbers for completion of each year of the second cycle. For these reasons, the sample has been used.

4. '"Freirean education" desocialises students from passivity in the classroom. It challenges their learned anti-intellectualism and authority-dependence [waiting to be told what to do and what things mean] ...[It] also desocialises teachers from dull and domineering teacher-talk they are socialised into, transforming them into problem-posers and dialogue-leaders instead' (Shor 1993:33).

CHAPTER 4: CACE STUDENTS IN ABET

1. The two inmates had been involved in ABET under a previous management but are no longer.

2. Sources: CACE narrative report May–December 1998; DFID review report undated (end 1997); ABET Unit facilitator lists provided by the Department of Education for 1998–2000.

3. The abbreviations are as they appear on the form – no explanation as to their meaning was given.

4. This section deals almost entirely with Certificate students because there are so few Advanced Diploma students employed in ABET.

5. For example, a policy where facilitators could work for not more than 25 hours a week in another job where they are only required to work six hours a week for ABET. This would presumably be adjusted according to the categories of facilitators.

6. The Department does not always apply this policy rigidly and tries to accommodate learners.

7. Facilitator training that takes place in term time often has a dramatic effect on learner attendance and facilitators have to go round and recruit all over again.

8. The Northern Cape Mining Network believes that skilled personnel are essential at Level 1. At the same time, they assume that ABET facilitators will eventually have no work (interview with De Beers Training Officer, 18/01/01) and see them moving into other training roles in the company. Similarly, if the need for ABET abates, skilled staff could easily move into human resources or development sectors. This is especially true of those who have the broad training provided by the CACE courses.

CHAPTER 5: CACE STUDENTS AS DEVELOPMENT WORKERS

1. The community experience requirement was waived at the request of the Department of Education so as to absorb unemployed matriculants and respond to the need for ABET facilitators generated by the Ithuteng campaign.

2. SALGA is the South African Local Government Association, which is mandated by the Constitution to assist in the transformation of local government.

3. For a more detailed discussion see section 7.1 in Chapters 2 and 3.

4. At the time of the interview, the elections were five weeks away. Results in the November 2000 elections confirmed these students' success in winning the Bonteheuwel ward.

5. Four Certificate students from Schmidtsdrif produced an interesting piece of research in an attempt to find out why it is that the resettlement of the !Xû and Khwe community is taking so long. Aside from being evidence of these students' research skills, it is also interesting to see how they grapple with the issues thrown up by the research, which include the recommendation that traditional gender roles be challenged. At the moment, women are encouraged to get married at a very young age, and after this are regarded as the property of their husbands.

6. Source: Department of Education, Congress of South African Trade Unions, Development Bank of Southern Africa, Centre for Education Policy Development and National Literacy Cooperation. (1996) *Research report in adult education and development.* Midrand: Development Bank of Southern Africa. pp. 5–7.

CHAPTER 6: CASE STUDIES: NOUPOORT AND CARNARVON

1. Sources: Northern Cape Department of Education, Training, Arts and Culture (Adult Education and Training) *October/November 1998 Assessment*; Department of Education, ABET Unit *2000 Assessment*; Adult Education and Training Unit *Annual Report 1998*; regional coordinator's *Report of De Aar region*, September 2000. (The numbers on the De Aar region report do not correlate entirely with the provincial ABET learner assessment sheets for 2000. The researcher has therefore used the assessment sheets to calculate throughput rates.)

2. REVQ = rate for education vocational qualifications

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

1. Research question 10

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APPENDIX 1: CACE Evaluation Questionnaire – October 2000

Complete this questionnaire to let us know how you feel about the CACE modules/ courses you attended and how useful they have been in your ABET work.

Be as frank as you like - your name will not appear in any report.

Tick the appropriate box after each question and then add any extra comments.

Your personal details

1. Name: _____

2. Home address: _____

3. Telephone: _____

4. Work address: _____

5. Telephone: _____

6. Male ☐ Female ☐

7. Age: _____

8. CACE course attended: Certificate ☐ Advanced Diploma ☐

Year: 1996-1997 ☐ 1998-1999 ☐

Did you complete this course? Yes ☐ No ☐

9. Name of your employer before you studied with CACE: _____

_____

10. Your position then: _____

11. Your income then: _____

12. Please describe the work you did then: _____

_____

13. Name and address of your employer now: _____

_____

14. Your position: _____

15. Your current income: _____

16. Please describe the work you do now: _____

_____

ABET learning groups

17. Are you teaching ABET learning groups? Yes ☐ No ☐

18. At what level? Level 1 ☐ Level 2 ☐ Level 3 ☐ Level 4 ☐

19. How many learners are there in your biggest group today? _____

20. How many learners were in this group at the beginning of the year or when it started? _____

Language

21. Your home language: Setswana ☐ isiXhosa ☐ Afrikaans ☐ English ☐

22. What other languages do you speak?

Setswana ☐ isiXhosa ☐ Afrikaans ☐ English ☐

23. What is the main language used for learning in your ABET groups:

Setswana ☐ isiXhosa ☐ Afrikaans ☐ English ☐

CACE courses

24. Are you able to apply what you learnt from CACE in your work?

Always ☐ Often ☐ Not often ☐ Never ☐

25. Which module helped you the most in your work? _____

_____

26. Compared to other courses you have attended, the CACE course was:

The most useful ☐ About the same ☐ Less useful ☐

27. How did the CACE course affect your life? (for example, at home, at work, in your community, as a learner) _____

_____

28. How has the CACE course affected your work with your learners? _____

	Most of the time	Some of the time	Not often
Careful planning and evaluation in my work	☐	☐	☐
Content linked to development needs	☐	☐	☐

Other _____

29. What outcomes have you defined with your ABET groups? (for example, more participation in community and workplace organisations) _____

30. Have you achieved any of these outcomes? _____

31. What helps you to promote ABET in the place where you work?

32. What hinders you? _____

33. What new community initiatives have you been involved in? (for example, small business, health, policing)

34. Are you interested in attending other CACE modules in the future?

Yes ☐ No ☐

35. What subjects would you like to study?

36. Can we contact you for an interview to discuss your views and experiences?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Thank you!

APPENDIX 2: Guidelines for interview questions

BEFORE THE INTERVIEW

Check your equipment! Make sure the recorder works and make sure you have a blank tape and strong batteries. Much research fails because people forget to do this!

AS YOU BEGIN

- Introduce yourself.
- Explain the research project and your role (independent, not working for the Dept or for CACE but for the funders; part of a team of eight researchers trying to find out how students felt about the CACE courses and what impact they have had on their lives).
- Reassure the person about confidentiality of any information s/he gives – no names will be mentioned.
- Explain tape recorder.
- Switch on, check that tape is running.

Possible questions

1. What got you interested in the CACE course?
2. How did you find the course? What were some of the strengths? Some of the weaknesses? For example, how did you find the academic support you received?
3. What particular modules helped you? Or didn't help you?
4. Can you talk about how the CACE course has affected your life? (As a person, your family, you as an educator, you as a community development worker/activist, you as a learner.)
5. Can you tell me about the work you do in the community? What are some of the projects you are involved in? Are you using any of the knowledge or skills you learnt from CACE?
6. What are some of the factors that help you in your development work? What are some of the barriers to this work?
7. What are some of the results of the work you are doing?

   EXAMPLES: Increased participation in decision-making structures; increased participation **by women** in these structures; more women in leadership positions; increased income-generating potential; increased confidence; better health and nutrition awareness; better sanitation/water supply; better relationships between the police and the community, etc.

FOR PEOPLE TEACHING ABET CLASSES

1. What kinds of issues do your learners talk about in the learning group?
2. How do you follow up these issues?
3. Do you use them as part of your lessons? How?
4. Are there other ways that your work in the ABET group is linked to other development issues in the community?

END the interview

Thank the person and tell them how useful it has been.

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APPENDIX 3: Table of documents and materials examined

	DFID (formerly ODA)	ABET Unit	CACE	Advanced Diploma	Certificate
Project memoranda	✓		✓		
Quarterly reports to donors			✓	✓	✓
DFID partnership evaluations	✓				
Annual reports		✓	✓		
Quarterly reports		✓		✓	✓
Correspondence among the partners	✓	✓	✓		
Strategic plans and other planning documents		✓		✓	✓
Course brochures				✓	✓
Curriculum documents				✓ (notes)	✓
Training materials		✓		✓	✓
Learning materials		some		most	✓
Outlines and evaluations of Study Weekends				✓	✓
Correspondence between staff and students				✓	✓
Student profiles				✓	✓
Student assignments and projects				✓	✓
Student evaluations				✓	✓
Student results				✓	✓
ABET learner enrolments		✓			
ABET learner results		✓			
Facilitator lesson plans		✓			
Job adverts		✓			
Funding proposals and agreements	✓		✓		
Prolit reports on facilitator training		✓			
Others:					
Northern Cape AET Council meeting minutes			✓		
National ABET policy documents			✓		

APPENDIX 4: Sample outcomes for the Advanced Diploma

AE 101 Adult Basic Education and Training

By the end of this ABET course, you should:

- have a clearer understanding of the meaning of ABET;
- have an overview of the recent history and current trends, debates and competing visions of ABET;
- be able to identify the main curriculum approaches adopted in ABET;
- be familiar with the main features and the advantages and disadvantages of an outcomes-based curriculum;
- understand three main approaches to assessment for learners;
- understand how outcomes-based assessment links to accreditation within the NQF;
- be familiar with three kinds of training provided for ABET practitioners;
- understand how the ETDP model and the NQF promote the professionalisation of ABET;
- have improved your learning skills and your ability to learn through distance education; and
- have a critical appreciation of this ABET course, its effectiveness and the extent to which it meets your needs.

AE 102 Adult Education and Training – Theory and Practices

Module 1: Designing educational interventions, strategies for teaching life skills and educating for social change (outcomes not available).

Module 2: Literacy, Language and Basic Education

By the end of this ABET course, you should:

- understand what is involved in setting up an ABET programme;
- be familiar with important theories about literacy, language, and basic education for adults;
- be able to identify and critically evaluate key approaches to teaching literacy, language and basic education to adults;
- be able to read more complex academic texts critically and identify bias in texts;
- be able to identify the main ideas, extract ideas from texts and summarise ideas;
- be able to use quotes and references in writing and draft ideas for assignments; and
- be able to monitor own progress and evaluate your learning.

AE 201 Adult Education and Training in Transition: Transforming Policy and Society

By the end of this course, you should:

- be able to critically analyse the relationship between education and training policy and social transformation in the context of the South African transition;
- understand adult education and training policies in SA;
- be able to use some analytical skills and know more about social transition in SA;
- have an understanding of the process of social transformation which has taken place in the adult education and training policy context and in broader society; and
- feel more confident to participate in education policy-making and respond to the challenges facing educators during this period of social transition.

AE 202 Your Organisation, Your Role

By the end of this course, you should:

- know about role theory and influence strategies within organisations;
- know about classical bureaucratic and scientific management theory;
- know about human relations and interpersonal dynamics in organisations;
- understand organisations as political systems;
- know about the cultural or symbolic approach to organisations;
- know about organisation development as process and methods; and
- know about doing a business plan.

(Sources: 1998 Annual Report, 1999 Final assessment in review, 24/01/2000)

APPENDIX 5: Sample outcomes of Certificate modules

These are the outcomes or things that you should be able to do by the end of the Certificate course:

Organising Skills

- show understanding of practical, democratic organisational procedures in meetings, evaluations, etc.
- use a range of administrative skills, e.g. word-processing, writing project proposals
- show understanding of the working structure of selected organisations

Contextual Studies

- show understanding of selected social processes
- show awareness of how social context affects adult education
- show critical thinking and problem-solving skills
- use a range of research, study and communication strategies
- link ABET classes/youth activities with development

Facilitating Adult Learning

- show understanding of adults as learners
- show the qualities of a reflective practitioner
- plan and facilitate a workshop on a topic of your choice
- understand and use the principles of popular education

Race, Class, Gender, Culture course

- show understanding of how to deal with the problems of race, class, gender and cultural discrimination
- show understanding of some of the debates in this field
- use appropriate attitude in adult and community education, such as non-racist, non-sexist, negotiator, tolerant, respectful and empathetic attitudes

Research Methods

- show understanding of what research means and what it involves
- carry out research and report on a limited piece of research using social research methods in a familiar setting

ABET for Development

- demonstrate understanding of the current ABET development context in SA
- show understanding of the link between adult education and development
- train adults to start a small business
- train adults in literacy in their mother-tongue

General

- show conflict management and group skills
- communicate effectively both orally and in writing
- reflect critically on your own development
- work effectively in teams
- develop skills for academic study

(Source: Course Guide CACE Certificate for educators of adults 1998–9 pp. 4–6)

APPENDIX 6: The critical cross-field education and training outcomes

1. Identify and solve problems in which responses display that responsible decisions using critical and creative thinking have been made.
2. Work effectively with others as a member of a team, group, organisation, community.
3. Organise and manage oneself and one's activities responsibly and effectively.
4. Collect, analyse, organise and critically evaluate information.
5. Communicate effectively using visual, mathematical and/or language skills in the modes of oral and/or written presentation.
6. Use science and technology effectively and critically, showing responsibility towards the environments and health of others.
7. Demonstrate an understanding of the world as a set of related systems by recognising that problem-solving contexts do not exist in isolation

The five qualities

In order to contribute to the full personal development of each learner and the social and economic development of society at large, it must be the intention underlying any programme of learning to make an individual aware of the importance of:

1. reflecting on and exploring a variety of strategies to learn more effectively;
2. participating as responsible citizens in the life of local, national and global communities;
3. being culturally and aesthetically sensitive across a range of social contexts;
4. exploring education and career opportunities, and
5. developing entrepreneurial opportunities.

(Source: Department of Education (1997) *Policy document on ABET.* Pretoria: Department of Education, Directorate Adult Education and Training)

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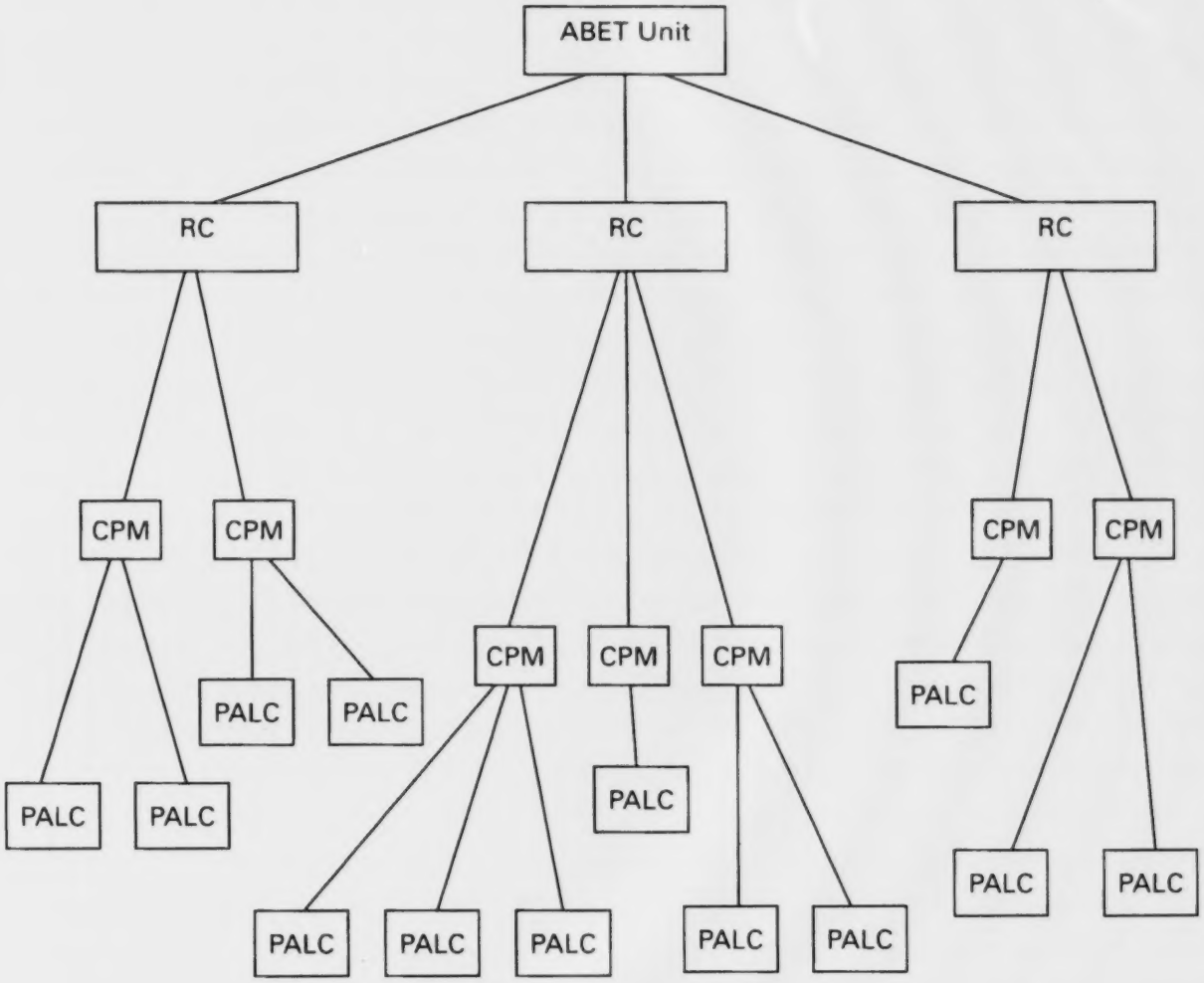
APPENDIX 7: Structure of ABET Unit (Northern Cape)



RC = regional coordinator

CPM = Cluster Programme Manager

PALC = public adult learning centre

APPENDIX 8: Subjects that respondents would like to study in future

Advanced Diploma

- Research ways and strategies to empower the poor and continuity of growth in that field
- Project management
- Computer literacy (x 3)
- Management or Development & Training
- Business management & marketing
- Organisation Development (x 2)
- Theory of Education & Psychology
- Research methods
- MBA, Pedagogics, Theory of Education & OD or Psychology
- OBE in ABET
- ABET curriculum
- Writing books for ABET
- ABET courses – English, etc.
- B.Ed in adult education
- Master's degree in Adult Education
- Administration
- Local Government (IDP), Tourism & Cultural courses

Certificate

- Psychology, Counselling
- More about development (x 3)
- Mathematics, Computers (x 8)
- Information Technology & Management
- Diploma (x 4)
- Advanced Diploma (x 2)
- Subjects based on literacy
- Mother-tongue literacy
- Arts & Culture (Tourism-Attraction please!)
- Photography
- Small Business (x 4) Module: 4 months
- Contextual Studies (x 2)
- Human Resource Management (x 5)
- Public Relations
- Project Management (x 3)
- About Economics, Politics, Project Management, Computers
- Psychology
- Executive leadership programmes on Local Government + local government (x 2)
- ABET for development
- ABET
- More about ABET policies & school management because I want to start my own adult centre one day
- Subjects that will take me deeper in this career (either ABET or computers)
- Technology & Economic & Management Science & Financial Management (x 2)
- SMME, Community Trainer
- Developer
- Anything that can help me develop our people
- Sociology

- Introduction to Development
- Office practice, Admin & Typing
- All the subjects introduced previously are so relevant, I am willing to take any, some new one to be introduced
- Numeracy & Communication
- Labour laws & business plans
- Business Skills (x 4)
- Modules which are relevant to the adult learning
- To further with the Adult learning
- Organising Skills (x 5)
- Research methods (x 9)
- Facilitating Adult Learning (x 6) (+ 1 teaching methods)
- Adult teaching & learning, Introduction to business & Teaching Practice, Development Studies & Research in education
- Management Communication
- Environmental Studies
- Marketing; other commercial studies
- Science, mathematics and biology
- Theology (if applicable)
- Material development
- Public Administration, marketing, management
- I think anything what CACE give to do I can do that

APPENDIX 9: Current employment of Advanced Diploma interview sample

1996: 8 students **1998: 21 students**

Employment	Position	1996	1998
ABET	Facilitator	0	4 (and 1 volunteer)
	Senior officials	2	2
	Cluster Programme Manager		
Formal schools	Teacher	5	3
	Senior education officials	2	2
ABET (Correctional Services)			2
AETASA			1
CBO/NGO			3
Local government			1
Self-employed			
Mining			
Department of Health			
Department of Labour			
Department of Social Services			
Security services			
Private sector			1
Studying			
Unemployed		1	
Retired			1

Note: See Table 3.2 for figures for current employment of Certificate sample.

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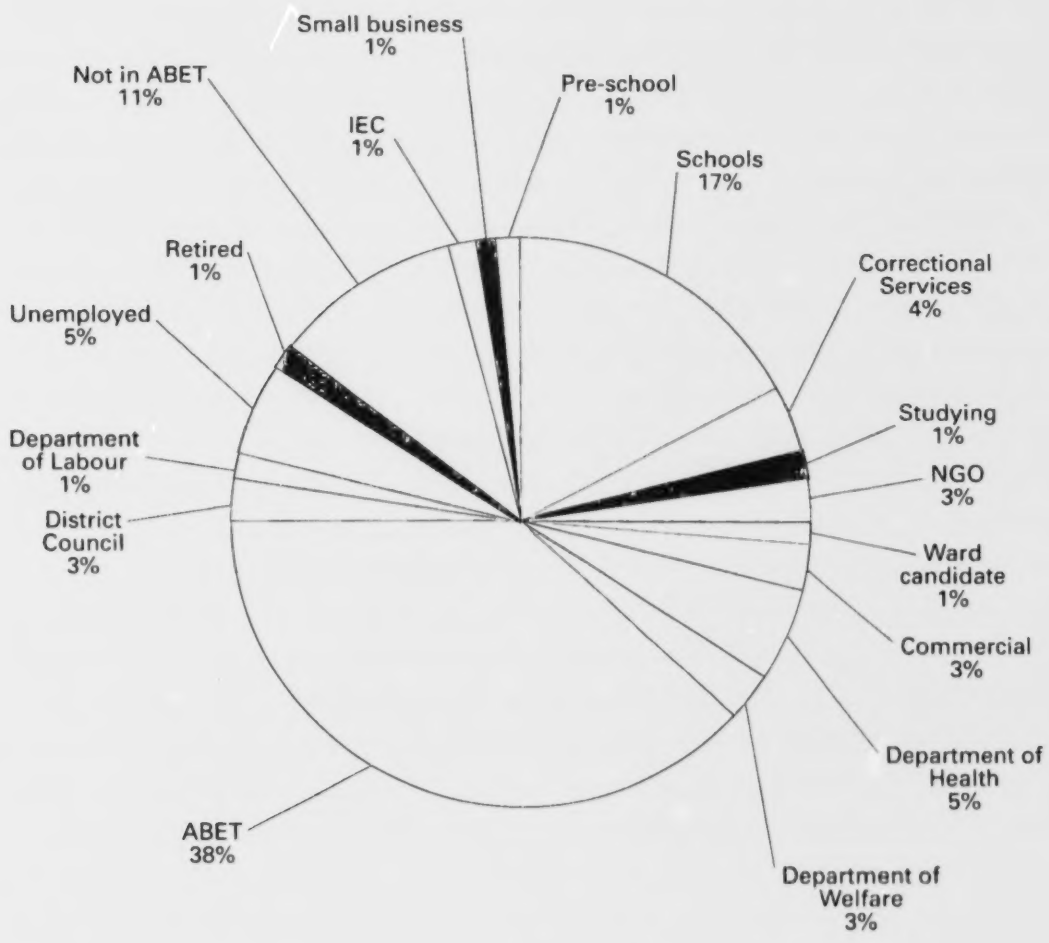
APPENDIX 10: Sectors of employment of respondents



This figure shows the sectors of employment recorded by the 27% of CACE students who returned the questionnaire. It includes both Advanced Diploma and Certificate students.

While 38% are working in the ABET Unit of the Department of Education, another 16% of respondents can also be said to be working in the field of adult basic education and training: those in the Departments of Labour, Health, Social Services and Correctional Services as well as NGOs. This gives a total figure of 54%.

APPENDIX 11: Funding mechanisms for short courses and skills training

Baatjes (personal communication, 11/05/2001) suggests that the levy to enable the provision of needs-based courses, short courses on issues such as health, leadership skills, etc. and skills training should come from the Nationals Skills Fund (Skills Levies Act 1999). There are three ways to achieve this:

1. that for the next five years there is a commitment from the National Skills Authority to dedicate a percentage (maybe 5%) of the National Skills Fund to ABET. This would be the funds allocated to the unemployed; this percentage should be established in some way with funds allocated to NGOs via the National Development Agency (NDA) and the current national Department of Education budget for ABET. The aim would be to bring the overall budget as close as possible to the 10% that is so often demanded. Currently the national Department of Education budget for ABET is still below 1%. The reason for this demand is because of the increased need for ABET due to the increase in unemployment, the existing need, the lack of resourcing by national government, and the lack of 'economic will' for ABET.
2. that every Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA) clearly reflects a budget for ABET in their Sector Skills Plans. This could easily be monitored through Workplace Skills Plans. Every workplace could show the number of ABET workers being provided for and the budget allocation. SETAs could agree on a percentage to be dedicated to ABET for five years and could request this data through the questions that they ask to Skills Development Facilitators. The need to dedicate a percentage to ABET must be emphasised because of the bold statement made in the Nationals Skills Development Strategy that 70% of the workforce should have a NQF 1 qualification by 2005. For the mining sector, as one example, this is a tall order because, in some cases, the illiteracy rate could be as high as 80% and the target number is more than 200 000 workers.
3. that the Premier in the Northern Cape requests from both the provincial government and the business and industry community in the province to show their support for ABET in concrete terms. The pooling of resources through Workplace Skills Plans could be very helpful.

APPENDIX 12: List of people interviewed

CACE students interviewed

Afrika, Thobeka
Afrikaner, Anna
Appies, David
Boezak, Tricia
Bosman, Alice
Bostander, Bernie
Brown, Susanna
Bugan, Elizabeth
Buys, Leonard
Clark, Adel
Cloete, Gina
Cloete, Sofie
Cloete, Valene
Coetzee, Janekke
Coetzee, Teresa
Da Vinci, Vincent
Davids, Reginald
De Klerk, Euodiah
Duku, Joao
Fortuin, Elizabeth
Fortuin, Michael
Goqwana, Nozuko S.
Grove, Terry
Hendriks, Charmain
Hoffman, James
Jack, Zelna
Jack, Xolile
Jacobs, Chrissie
Jansen, Leonard
January, Mary
January, Thembani
Jongman-Peter, Zimela
Kamalie, Shaheeda
Katembo, Tressel
Khutso, Thelma
Kock, Soutie Weldin
Koerana, Marie
Leepile, Genevieve
Leukes, Martin
Links, Beverley
Lotriet, Mita
Mabongo, Vice
Maki, Sipho Samuel
Mangaliso, Ntombekhaya
Manu, Petrus
Matholengwe, Thanana
Mathopa, Rosina
Matlhoahela, Baitseng Lillian
Matthee, Alvin
Matthee, Cathy
Mhlauli, Mimmy
Mjekula, Wakes
Mochesane, Harold
Modupe, Thabo
Moilwe, John
Mokopelwa, A.
Mona, Serina
Moncho, Betty Bontle
Moncho, Rachel
Mothlale, Thembiso
Motsamai, Lydia
Mtubu, Solomzi
Musuabi, Winifred
Ngogodo, Maureen
Nkomo, Kateyateya
Nkwenkwezi, Mafu Desmond

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Nore, Tomsen
Ntamo, Teresa
Ntoni, Zenzile W.
Pemba, Vuyelwa
Phalatsi, Mirriam
Phike, Glen Richard
Philippus, Emily
Pienaar, Andie
Plaatjie, Sebetso
Rabie, Joan
Rabotolo, Jonathan
Raneyeke, Calvin
Rasmeni, Finah
Rhoda, Mary
Ruiter, Heinricht
Sacco, Piet
Selelo, Ishmael
Seloni, Princess
Sinigisi, Henry
Slinger, Rosie
Steyn, Ntombi
Stuurman, Kholeka
Swartland, Hayley
Teisho, Lydia
Thulo, Palesa
Thuynsma, Sharon
Titus, Vilene
Tom, Moira Z.
Veerus, Mercia

Northern Cape Dept of Education (ABET Unit)

(also CACE students)*

Fortuin, Michael*	*Senior Education specialist responsible for assessment*
Kamalie, Shaheeda*	*former member of Core Provincial Training Team*
Lobbie, Lungile	*Deputy chief Education specialist and regional coordinator (De Aar region)*
Mohlala, Melita	*Chief Education specialist*
Thulo, Palesa*	*Senior Education specialist responsible for practitioner development*

Cluster Programme Managers

Afrika, Thobeka*	
Basholo, Yaleka	
Bugan, Elizabeth*	*(*also Acting regional coordinator)*
Modise, Mabel*	
Mokopelwa, Alfred*	
Pemba, Violet*	

Western Cape Education Department

Coetzee, Anelia	*Chief planner (ABET sub-directorate)*
Loynes, Keith	*Chief planner, Technical Colleges*

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CACE staff

Alexander, Lucy	*Certificate coordinator and lecturer*
Dayile, Nomvuyo	*Certificate lecturer*
Groener, Zelda	*Northern Cape programme manager (1998–99) and Advanced Diploma lecturer*
Hendricks, Natheem	*Northern Cape coordinator (1996–97), lecturer*
Swartland, Hayley	*CACE training coordinator in the Northern Cape*
Walters, Shirley	*Director*

Northern Cape (general)

Antonie, Philip	*Deputy director of Social Services and Population Development, Northern Cape*
Manuel, Percy	*HRD manager De Beers Geology Division, member of De Beers ABET mining network, Northern Cape*
Marais-Martin, Moira	*Youth commissioner and former member of the Northern Cape ABET Unit, secretary of Northern Cape AET council, member of National Interim ABET Advisory Board (IAAB)*
Sebusho, Sipho	*Provincial head of Education and Training, Department of Correctional Services, Northern Cape*

Kimberley region

Da Vinci, Vincent	*AETASA, administrator of Northern Cape AET Council*
Fredericks, Isaac	*ABET facilitator*
Jenniker, Mr	*Circuit manager, Department of Education*
Seopedengwe, Lydia	*ECD practitioner*
Sindi, Veronica	*Kimberley Literacy project /Dirisanang AE centre*

Upington region

Botma, Hester	*ABET facilitator, Tshipi Training Centre*
Feni, Teach	*Coordinator of the Inkqubela Resource Centre, Paballelo*
Fraser, Hana	*ABET facilitator, Tshipi Training Centre*
Jacobs, Chrissie	*Stigting vir Afrikaans*
Jacobs, Cor	*Stigting vir Afrikaans and member of Northern Cape AET Council*

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De Aar region

Noupoort

Booysen, Regina	*Librarian*
Luyatsha, Rev. R.	*Ethiopian Church of South Africa*
Ramnewana, Edith	*Manager of the Sikhulule Chicken Enterprise, pastor of the Christ the King Ministries*
Thibane, Moses M.	*Councillor for the Towerberg Municipality*

Carnarvon

Hoorn, Bennie	*Principal of the Karel van Zyl Primary School, Chairperson of the Local Development Forum, and pastor*
Slaverse, George	*former coordinator of literacy project under the RDP*
Stuurman, Shaheed	*social worker*

APPENDIX 13: CACE staff involved in Northern Cape programmes

The Advanced Diploma course was planned and delivered by
Roy Crowder (programme coordinator)
Zelda Groener (programme coordinator)
Marian Clifford
Chris Mullins
Doug Reeler

Administration at Cape Town
Nonkonzo Martins

The Certificate course was planned and delivered by
Lucy Alexander (programme coordinator)
Nomvuyo Dayile
Jonathan Geidt

Additional facilitation
Natheem Hendricks

Training coordination
Hayley Swartland

Tutors
Xolile Jack, Lisanne Leroux, Willie Magongwa, Anel Marais, Thanana Matolengwe, Alvin Matthee, Wakes Mjekula, Joan Rabie, Donald Ramah, Samaria Sehako, Johanna Stoffels, Hayley Swartland, Vilene Titus

Administration
Cape Town: David Kapp, Steven Kemp, Suheimah Towfie, Sonia Wanza
Kimberley: James Moropo

Resource Centre coordinator
Albert Ntunja

report details the impact of an adult education and training programme in the Northern Cape. The relative isolation of communities in South Africa's largest but least populated province presents an unusual opportunity to record and analyse the discernible effects of this capacity-building programme and the extent to which outcomes were achieved.

In 1996 a partnership was set up between the Education Department of the Northern Cape Province and the Centre for Adult and Continuing Education (CACE) at the University of the Western Cape, supported by DFID, SIDA and other funding agencies. The overall aim was to develop sustainable capacity to deliver improved Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) programmes. Between 1996 and 1999 CACE trained 148 education, training and development practitioners at Certificate level and 54 at Advanced Diploma level.

The report describes the impact of the courses in three broad areas: the personal and professional lives of students; the provision of ABET to learners in the province; and the communities in which past students live or work. It traces the experiences of students responsible for providing formal ABET programmes, and gives statistical and descriptive evidence of the extent to which others became involved in development initiatives within their communities. Two case studies of small rural towns, Noupoort and Carnarvon, describe challenges that can face ABET practitioners.

The impact of the project, documented here, contributes detailed evidence to crucial questions around the sustainability of development initiatives: What factors enable education and training to have a community impact? What kinds of programmes are appropriate in terms of delivery and content? What are effective ways to implement ABET policies? What role can ABET play in broader development processes? What do stronger ties between ABET and development imply for educator training and national unit standards? How can donor funding be most effectively used to reach marginalised communities?

The Northern Cape Education Department and CACE have jointly shaped one of the most successful ABET Units in the country. It is hoped that this report can play some part in its further development and in affirming the far-reaching potential of effective adult education.

Published by Centre for Adult and Continuing Education (CACE) with the support of DFIDSA.
Additional copies available from:
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University of the Western Cape
Bellville 7535
Tel: (021) 959 2798
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